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ABSTRACT

This Personalized Activity Kit (PAK) deals with the procedures for selecting and organizing a representative school-community committee. Ways of analyzing the community are examined to provide a basis for the choice of the committee members. After completing this unit, the participant should have the skill necessary to select and organize a representative committee for his particular community. Appendixes contain facilitator guidelines and sample worksheets. (Author/IRT)

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ED141905

# A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS KIT

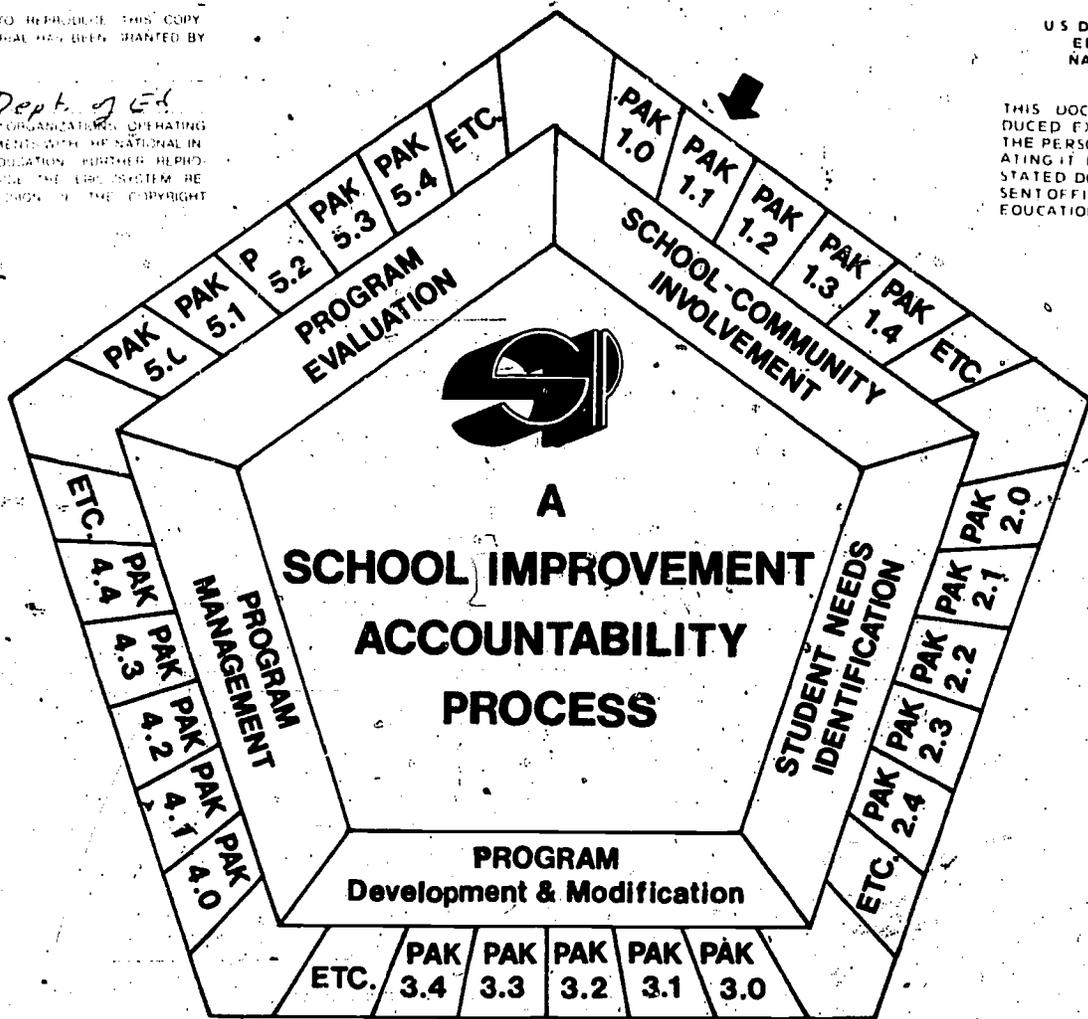
## PAK #1.1 - FORMING A REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

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Personalized Activity Kit (PAK) for use as:

- Individualized Study Guide
- Small Group Study Guide
- Workshop Facilitator's Guide

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS KIT

PAK #1.1 - FORMING A REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Calvin M. Frazier  
Commissioner

Denver, Colorado  
July 1975

This PAK was written in 1973 by members of the District  
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## DIRECTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE PAK

Each PAK is designed to be used in three alternative ways: 1) an individual user can work through the packet on his own; 2) a small group may work cooperatively; or, 3) a group of participants may be involved in a workshop situation under the leadership of a facilitator. Experience indicates that the latter is the most desirable situation. While an individual may work through the materials on his own, he misses those shared experiences which come as learners interact in a group situation.

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### PLEASE NOTE

*Because this PAK will be used by many people in your district, please mark only the worksheets supplied by your instructor. Do not mark the pages of this PAK. Sample transparencies and worksheets (for duplication) are included in Appendices A and B.*

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If you are using PAK materials in a group workshop situation, consult Appendix A for detailed instructions. The diagram on the cover page and diagrams for Appendix A may be used to make overhead transparencies.

If you are working through the PAK individually, follow the general directions listed below:

- Read content of the PAK.
- Refer to Appendix A, page 2, for additional instructions.
- Do the exercises on worksheets copies from Appendix B. (when included)
- Read the bibliography (when included):

# DEGREES OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Information Received from Community

Information Acted Upon by Staff

	STAGE I	STAGE II	STAGE III	STAGE IV	STAGE V
Information Received from Community	School-Community Involvement	Student Needs Identification	Program Development Modification	Program Management	Program Evaluation
Information Acted Upon by Staff				STAFF	
	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT			STAFF INVOLVEMENT	
Information Received from Community	Goals Identified	Program and Interpreted	Program Designed/Modified	Program Planned and Managed	Results Reported

RESULTS REPORTED BY STAFF TO THE COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY RESPONSE

## FORMING A REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Purpose

This PAK deals with the procedures for selecting a representative school-community committee. Ways of analyzing the community are examined to provide a basis for the choice of the committee members. After completing this unit the participant should have the skills necessary to select a representative committee for his particular community.

Degrees of School-Community Involvement in a School Improvement Process

The School Improvement Process calls for extensive community involvement during Stages I and II when the school's educational program is interpreted, the educational problems are determined, and educational goals are identified. Later, during Stages III, IV, and V, community involvement decreases somewhat as the school's program is modified, managed, and the results reported. Then, during the final phase of program evaluation, community involvement is intensified once more and the entire process starts over again. (See page 1)

A school improvement committee can serve many purposes. The major functions of such a group -- students, staff, parents, concerned citizens -- should be to:

- (1) gather the community's concerns about its schools;
  - (2) determine the current educational problems;
  - (3) identify the necessary objectives to be met;
  - (4) review progress made by school staff members in achieving these objectives and resolving the educational problems;
- and
- (5) examine the evidence by which the strengths and weaknesses of programs may be determined.

A single school-community committee may be formed and given all of the above responsibilities, or several committees may be formed and given only one or more of these assignments.

It must be emphasized that the functions of school improvement committee members will necessarily differ from those of a school board. Some of these differences are as follows:

School-Community Committee

1. Is appointed by the school board.
2. Is primarily a cross-section of the interest groups of the community.
3. Is an advisory group.

School Board

1. Is elected by the public.
2. Is primarily a cross-section of the geographic divisions of the community.
3. Is, by law, a decision-making group.

The differences in the functions of the two groups derive from the fact that while the committee serves to advise the school board, the school board by law makes the final decisions. Committee members should be advised that their recommendations will be used whenever possible, subject to the approval of the school board.

It is especially important that committee members understand that they are performing a vital service and believe that their contributions will be seriously considered. Both committee members and members of the professional staff should realize that neither will be given veto power over the other's recommendations. Only the local board of education has this power.

## STRUCTURING A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

The first step is for the school board to analyze the makeup of the community in order to identify its various groups. "Community" in this context is defined as meaning all those individuals within the geographic boundaries of a particular school attendance area or school district who will be affected by the educational processes taking place within that community.

This definition is suggested for use as the basis upon which your committee is selected. For your convenience, listed below are some possible distinguishing criteria for membership on your committee:

1. Citizens at large
  - a. parents of school age children
  - b. representatives of community businesses, services, religious and cultural organizations
  - c. representatives of school affiliated organizations
  - d. representatives from ethnic and socio-economic groups
  - e. representatives from governmental organizations
  - f. taxpayers who have no children in school
2. Citizens directly involved in the educational process
  - a. school board members
  - b. administrative staff
  - c. classroom teachers and other certificated personnel
  - d. classified personnel
3. Students

The initial step (in this instance, selection of a representative community committee) is the indicator of how successfully the subsequent procedures will be implemented. The educational leaders in a community know best the composition of the community and its general attitudes toward its institutions of public education. (Educational Goals and Objectives, A Model for Community and Professional Involvement. Produced by Program Development Center of Northern California, Dr. B. Keith Rose, Director.)

To insure that all segments of the community are included for consideration in forming the committee, it is recommended that an estimate be made of the percentage of the entire community included in each group. This estimate needs only to be approximate since it is to be used simply as an indication of the relative proportion each group should receive in the final selection of committee members. To keep the size of the committee functional, one person may need to represent a number of groups. Certainly those most

Immediately affected by these educational decisions should be involved in the planning. Therefore, it is of vital importance that a school-community committee include representatives from the student body and the school staff.

Turn to Appendix B, Worksheet #1, pages B-2 - B-6. Look it over. Get separate worksheets from your facilitator and complete this exercise. Work individually and share your results with your group members.

The next step is for the school board to resolve the following important questions:

1. How large should the committee be for optimum representation and effective functioning?
2. Should each group in the community be represented on the committee regardless of group size, or should there be proportionate representation?
3. What is the specific geographic area to be represented by the committee members?
4. Is it important that the committee member reside within this geographic area?
5. By what means can you assure the continuous involvement of students, school staff, and other community representatives in the committee's efforts?

Each of the questions above must be resolved or at least considered prior to the final selection of the committee members. Structuring a committee is complex. Sometimes compromises must be made to accommodate two or more conflicting aims and points of view.

It is generally helpful to include some members on the committee who represent different points of view. Diversity of interest or opinion may be more important than strict proportional representation.

While it is anticipated that committee members will channel the feelings of groups critical of the present education system, it is also important that these committee members be open to new ideas and capable of constructive action.

Turn to Appendix B, Worksheet #2, page B-7, and look it over. Get separate worksheets from your facilitator and complete this exercise. Work individually and share your results with your group members.

After the local school board has analyzed its community and established criteria for selection of committee members, a procedure for nominating people should be developed and widely disseminated. One example of a form useful in nominating people for the committee is in Appendix B, page B-8. Note the criteria used on this form. These may or may not be appropriate for your community. Selection criteria should be unique to the individual community.

In Appendix B, page B-9, is a sample finished product which resulted from the process you have just completed. For obvious reasons, only pertinent, non-provocative information is printed for committee use and public information.

## FIRST STEPS IN ORGANIZING THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Once the school board has selected the committee members and they have agreed to serve, the board should send an official notification of selection to each member. It is a good idea to send a copy of the list to the local newspaper and other mass media available. Included in the notice should be stated a date, time and place for a joint meeting of the committee and the school board.

The agenda for this first meeting should include an orientation session on the School Improvement Process. It is most important that both groups understand their roles and relationships so that future problems can be avoided. It is recommended that a charge for the committee be developed by the school board. This charge will detail what the committee is to do in terms of specific tasks. If there are certain areas such as staff evaluation that the school board does not want the committee to study, then these limitations should be stated in the charge. Conversely, those areas to be studied by the committee should also be stated. Any questions, concerns, or differences of opinion about the charge should be resolved by the board and the committee at this time. Provision should be made for regular progress reports to the school board. A sample charge to a school improvement committee follows:

SAMPLE CHARGE

TO: Members of the School Improvement Committee  
 FROM: The District Board of Education  
 SUBJECT: The Charge to the District School Improvement Committee  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Education of School District \_\_\_\_\_ is pleased to have the School Improvement Committee working for the continued improvement of education for our boys and girls.

Members of the Board of Education pledge their support and cooperation to the School Improvement Committee as it examines our local Educational program and makes recommendations for educational improvement.

The following conditions shall prevail and guide the work of the School Improvement Committee.

The School Improvement Committee:

shall be advisory to the Board of Education;

shall serve a three-year term with one-third of the committee appointed annually;

shall select sub-committees made up of representative students, professional staff, parents, and other concerned citizens to carry out specific assignments;

shall appoint its own chairman from its membership;

shall appoint a secretary from its membership whose duties shall be that of keeping minutes of all meetings and recording all major or significant motions, decisions, or committee action;

shall select a member of the administrative staff or Board of Education who shall serve as the official liaison for the District;

shall establish a schedule of meetings and general rules for its operation to be filed with the Board of Education;

shall publicize all meetings at least 24 hours in advance with meetings open to the public;

shall clear all press releases and reports with the Board of Education;

shall review all reports or recommendations with the Board of Education;

shall file, with the Board of Education, a work plan for the following school year by \_\_\_\_\_ (date);

shall file an annual report and recommendations with the local Board of Education by \_\_\_\_\_ of each year on the progress achieved in the local school district during the previous school year;

shall periodically hold joint meetings with the local Board of Education and review and update the charge to the School Improvement Committee.

(SAMPLE CHARGE, continued)

TASKS DELEGATED TO THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE:

- (1) plan and coordinate Student Needs Identification in the school district;
- (2) submit priority list of student needs to the school board;
- (3) serve as a "sounding board" for new ideas, materials, and concepts;
- (4) review and recommend revisions in school district policies and philosophies based on a Student Needs Identification;
- (5) conduct periodic gathering of community concerns about the educational program;
- (6) review, revise and recommend district goal statements;
- (7) develop a plan to disseminate information about the schools to the public;
- (8) carry out public information responsibilities assigned to the committee;
- (9) identify the characteristics of "quality education" as they pertain to the local district;
- (10) review the results of program evaluation(s) in order to determine whether local level decisions affecting educational processes are advancing or impeding progress of public education in the local district.

TASKS DELEGATED TO THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF:

- (1) development of learner, staff and program objectives;
- (2) selection of educational processes and materials;
- (3) evaluation of student progress;
- (4) appraisal of professional staff performance;
- (5) evaluation of educational programs with feedback to the committee.

Those responsibilities not delegated by the school board to the committee or to the professional staff are reserved to the board.

Further Services and Responsibilities of the Board and the Professional Staff to the Committee:

The school board and the local finance officer should allocate funds for use by the school improvement committee. The committee will need such items as clerical help, postage, stationery, telephone expenses, and possibly, outside consultant help.

Those districts experiencing the greatest degree of success in implementing the School Improvement Process have assigned a professional staff member on either a full or part-time basis (depending upon the size of the school district) to expedite the work of the committee. This coordinator serves as the person to acquire resources necessary for the successful operation of the committee. He is not the chairman, nor does he do the work. His job is to help the committee do its work. He plans inservice training programs for committee members, professional staff, and students. He must be an expert in concerns analysis so that he can help the committee develop a work plan for conducting a Student Needs Identification and do the concerns analysis. He serves as a "linker" between the committee and the school staff, the committee and the students, and the school staff and the students.

It is important that the committee members do not get "bogged down" or "burned out" doing all of the work themselves. One approach which has proven to be successful is the formation of sub-committees by the steering committee. Suggested sub-committees are a professional staff steering committee and a student steering committee. Further, as a variety of specific tasks are identified, temporary sub-committees may be formed to accomplish them. The local coordinator helps these sub-committees plan and carry out work assignments vital to the success of the main school improvement committee whose primary functions are planning, delegating, coordinating, reviewing progress, reacting to sub-committee reports and educational plans, keeping the community regularly informed and continuously gathering community concerns to determine if needs are being met and/or new concerns are emerging.

## SUMMARY PAK #1.1

During each stage of the School Improvement Process there are varying degrees of community involvement. Extensive community involvement is required during Stages I and II when it is necessary to reach agreement on plans developed to meet student needs. The school improvement committee is responsible for keeping the school board and the community informed and to continue to gather concerns.

Extensive school staff involvement is required in Stages I, II and IV. During the Program Evaluation, Stage V, the committee reviews the evaluation report and plans ways to inform the community.

School improvement committees should not be asked to play the same role as the school board. They should be given assurance that their recommendations will receive serious consideration. It must be remembered that the final decision rests with the school board.

To avoid conflict between a committee and the school staff it is extremely important to develop a relationship of open communication and cooperative action during all stages of the process.

Prior to organizing a school improvement committee, a careful examination of groups in the community should be conducted. Various social, economic and ethnic groups in the community should be identified, as well as other groups unique to that community. Students and professional staff should be included as members on the committee. Using this community analysis, a deliberate effort should be made to secure reasonably adequate representation of the various interests to be served. Other factors such as differing points of view and personal characteristics of the candidate should also be considered in making the final selection of persons to serve on the committee.

Structuring a representative committee from all sectors (area, grouping, points of view) is a complex task. Those assigned the responsibility of choosing the committee members may have to make compromises in order to accommodate conflicting aims and opinions.

Once the committee is appointed and the School Improvement Process is explained to them, the school board should give them an official charge. A professional coordinator should be assigned responsibility for helping the committee. The school district should budget for committee expenses.

## SELECTED REFERENCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Ayars, Albert L., Administering the People's Schools, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957.
2. Biddle, William W., The Community Development Process, The Rediscovery of Local Initiative, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965.
3. Colorado Department of Education, A School Improvement Process: Accreditation By Contract, Denver, Colorado, October 1971.
4. Lewin, Kurt, "Group Decision and Social Change," in Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene L. Hartley (eds.) Readings in Social Psychology, New York: Holt, 1947.
5. Olsen, Edward G., The School and Community Reader: Education in Perspective, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963.
6. School Improvement Process Team, School Improvement Process Workshop: School-Community Involvement, Denver: Colorado Department of Education, 1972.
7. Warren, Roland L., Studying Your Community, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1955.
8. Worldwide Education and Research Institute, Conducting a Community Analysis, Salt Lake City, Utah: Worldwide Education and Research Institute, 1969.

## APPENDIX A

### FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR GROUPS

Each PAK has been organized around a fundamental and widely recognized generalization of how people learn. Learning occurs more efficiently when an overview is presented first. Succeeding learning experiences then take the person deeper into each concept adding more specific details. There may be several levels of exposure until real expertise is developed.

#### Workshop Specifications

- I. Time Required: Two hours
- II. Facilities: One room for each 24 participants. Participants to be seated at tables (maximum of six per table). Rooms should provide adequate accoustics and physical comfort suitable for a workshop session.
- III. Equipment & Material Needs:
- One overhead projector and viewing screen per room
  - Power extension cord (1 per room)
  - Transparency sheets
  - Grease pencils
  - Butcher paper
  - Masking tape
  - Chalkboard, chalk, eraser
  - Name tags (if necessary)

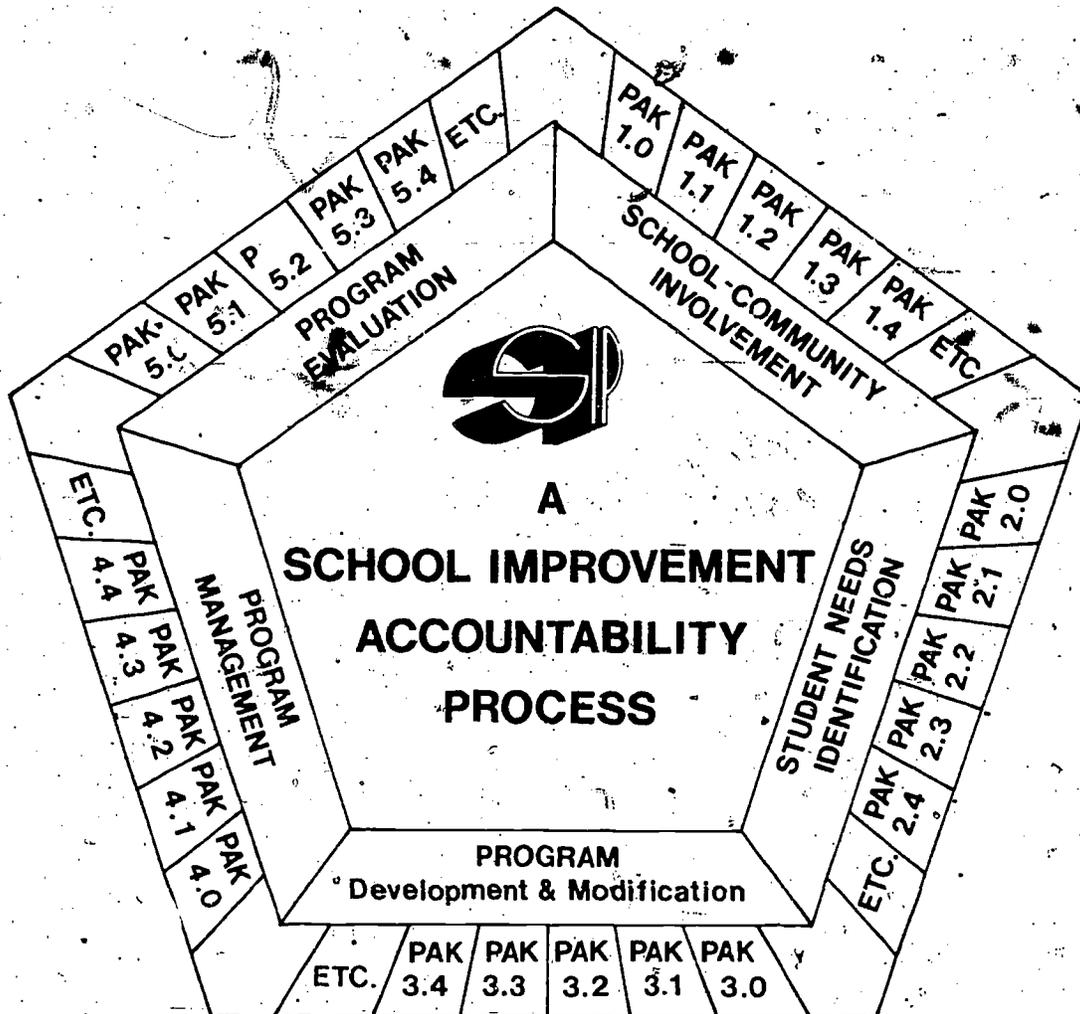
## Workshop Activities for PAK #1.1

The following sequence of activities is suggested and may be modified at your discretion.

1. 20 min. Have participants read materials on pages 1 to box on page 5.
2. 25 min. Have participants complete Worksheet #1, (Appendix B), pages B-1 - B-6. Share results with group.
3. 20 min. Resume reading where you left off and read until you come to the directions for Worksheet #2. Encourage discussion and answer questions.
4. 25 min. Complete Worksheet #2 (Appendix B-7). Emphasize that the important requirement is to decide on appropriate selection criteria.
5. 15 min. Conduct a summary session where each group shares the criteria chosen.
6. 5 min. Read pages 6 - 10.
7. 10 min. Call attention to the Summary, page 11. Remind the participants to complete the PAK critique form and turn it in to you.

*NOTE: As quickly as possible, review the critique forms for feedback information that may be helpful during other workshops.*

Total time: Approximately 2 hours.



A - 3

Appendix B Pak #1.1

Please do not mark this worksheet. Use the worksheet provided by your instructor.

- A. In order to be assured that true community involvement and representation has been achieved in the selection of the school improvement committee, it may be helpful to develop a "community profile." Through an analysis of this profile, a representative selection of committee members may be made.
- B. Please read the following instructions for this exercise.
1. Working individually, examine the sample "community profile," pages B-2 - B-5.
  2. In the Individual Selection Column, I, on the following exercise sheets, check (✓) those major categories (A-F) which you believe must be considered in determining membership for your committee. (In selecting those groups from which to draw your membership, consider carefully the sub-groups listed within some of the categories.) Then, fill in the requested information for those categories you checked by estimating answers and/or by using the sources of information listed on page B-6 of this appendix.
  3. When you have written in your individual selections, share responses with group members and reach concensus. Fill in final group selections in Column II.



F. Religious Affiliations (%):

\_\_\_\_\_ Catholic      \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish      \_\_\_\_\_ Protestant  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other

G. Political Affiliations (%):

\_\_\_\_\_ Democratic      \_\_\_\_\_ Republican      \_\_\_\_\_ Independent

\_\_\_\_\_ % of qualified voters who are registered

\_\_\_\_\_ % of registered voters who participated in last municipal election

H. Mobility:

(specify % or number)

How long does the average family stay in your school district? \_\_\_\_\_

I. Geographic Setting:

Location \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

J. Demographic Data:

\_\_\_\_\_ Population Size      \_\_\_\_\_ Population Density      \_\_\_\_\_ Marriage & Divorce Rate

\_\_\_\_\_ Birth & Death Rate

Age Distribution:

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 - 10      \_\_\_\_\_ 10 - 20      \_\_\_\_\_ 20 - 30

\_\_\_\_\_ 30 - 40      \_\_\_\_\_ 40 - 50      \_\_\_\_\_ 50 - 60

\_\_\_\_\_ 60 - 70      \_\_\_\_\_ 70 +

K. Racial Composition of the School District (%)

     American Indian         Asian American         Black  
     Spanish Surnamed American         Other Caucasian

L. Language Composition (%) :

	<u>Language Spoken in Home</u>	<u>Only Fluent Language Spoken by Child</u>
English	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Spanish	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
French	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Japanese	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Chinese	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

M. Types of Residents (%) :

     Home Owners         Home Renters         Apartments  
     Mobile Homes         Other

N. Major Organizations in the School District (names) :

O. Socio-Economic Description (%) :

     Upper-Upper         Upper         Upper-Middle  
     Lower-Middle         Lower         Lower-Lower

P. Pupil Information:

	Approx. # per year	Approx. % per year
1. <u>Drop-out Rate</u>		
For District	_____	_____
For School (specified)	_____	_____
For Grade Level (specified)	_____	_____
2. <u>Average Daily Attendance</u>		
For District	_____	_____
For School (specified)	_____	_____
For Grade Level (specified)	_____	_____

Q. <u>Number of Classroom Teachers:</u> (by grade)	_____ (Elem.)	_____ (Secondary)
<u>Number of Special Teachers:</u>	_____	_____
<u>Number of Paraprofessionals:</u>	_____	_____

R. Number of Students by Grade (K-12):

S. Other:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Bureau of the Census Publications

write to: Colorado Division of Planning  
524 Social Services Building  
1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Telephone Directory

- ° Yellow Pages
- ° Street Directory

State Documents

- ° Annual Report of Property Taxation
- ° Elementary & Secondary Education Act

PAK #1.1 - WORKSHEET #2: Group Selection Guidelines

*(Participants decide upon and fill in relevant information used to screen the candidates)*

Criterion #1    Criterion #2    Criterion #3    Criterion #4    Criterion #5    Criterion #6    Criterion #7

Criterion #1	Criterion #2	Criterion #3	Criterion #4	Criterion #5	Criterion #6	Criterion #7

B-7



## EXAMPLE OF A PUBLISHED ROSTER OF MEMBERS SELECTED FOR A SPECIAL COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	COMMUNITY
Cochine Ratlift	Child Welfare & Attend. Worker	San Jose
Sarah Jackson	Teacher	Fremont
Phyllis Zqissig	Teacher	Fremont
Alicia Castro	Teacher	San Jose
Marie Simbra	Instr. Aide	Fremont
John Mazzone	Principal	Fremont
Mary Gallardo	Parent	San Jose
E. Gallardo	Parent	San Jose
Marilyn Groat	Parent	Fremont
Sister Ann Garcia	Principal	Newark
Bonnie Sidentopf	Non-parent Citizen	Fremont
Virginia Aubrey	Student	Fremont
Michael Fregoso	Student	Fremont
Rudy Aguirre	Student	San Jose
Sister Frances Marie	Principal	San Jose
Gail Law	Prom. Reading Consultant	San Jose
Phil Brazil	Asst. Superintendent	Fremont

PAK #

(Please fill in number)

PAK CRITIQUE FORM

Please give your assessment and comments on the following:

PROGRAM ELEMENT	OUT- STANDING	VERY GOOD	FAIR	POOR	VERY POOR	COMMENTS
1. The quality & relevance of the subject matter.						
2. The appropriateness and usefulness of the instructional materials.						
3. The timing or sequencing of the various items presented.						
4. The directing and assistance given on the exercise.						

Other comments or suggestions for improving this PAK:

If this PAK was used as part of a WORKSHOP training session, then please also complete the following:

PROGRAM ELEMENT	OUT- STANDING	VERY GOOD	FAIR	POOR	VERY POOR	COMMENTS
5. The deployment, grouping or planned interaction of the participants.						
6. The productivity and/or usefulness of the individual work session(s).						
7. The comments or assistance given to you on your selected problem.						

mental phases of change programs. Within the informal social interaction and communication networks in bush communities there exists a protocol for dispensing and receiving information. Entering a home and discussing business immediately is not the way the informal organizational structure operates. Business cannot be rushed. If an occasion doesn't arrive for business discussion on the first visit there will always be other visits. Violations of these informal networks alienate one from the community and decrease the effectiveness of the facilitator. Adaptation to and maximizing the use of the informal organizational mechanisms within the community requires patience and familiarity with life styles. More informational substance can emerge over a pot of caribou than in a school gymnasium amidst professionals. For those interested in further details on native and non-native communication, see Vaudrin (1973).

My entry into the village of Barren Bay was established by invitation, from the village primarily, and then from the structures which at that time were controlling education in the village.

Correspondence was maintained one year prior to implementation of the change program with the bureaucratic organization responsible for education in the community. The correspondence consisted of a mutual exchange of ideas concerning the community control of education in rural Alaska. Current legislative proposals, memos pertinent to community control and cultural-educational objectives were items included within the communication. The exchange furnished me with current materials in the proposed area of concern and provided guidelines within the educational philosophies of the State-Operated School System and the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Communication was officially established with Barren Bay's school board three months prior to the first visit to the village. Informal communication with power figures in the community had been going on for a few years. The formal communication consisted of a letter and a brief explanation of the proposal, asking whether the community would be interested in a change program. The letter was followed up by a personal meeting in Anchorage with the recently resigned school board chairman. The ex-chairman, who was currently president of the village council, assured the facilitator that the advisory school board was interested. A copy of the program was presented to the council president and an invitation was extended to the community problem solving facilitator. Arrangements were made for the facilitator's accommodations and a date was set for the first visit.

Upon arrival in Barren Bay, the facilitator met immediately with the advisory school board chairman. In an informal setting in the chairman's home, the program was explained and the chairman suggested a school board meeting be called the following day. The school board meeting would allow for a formal presentation and a decision on the board's involvement. It is strongly suspected that a decision had already been made through the informal decision making network of the village.

After the consultation with the advisory school board chairman, the facilitator met with the principal teacher. The program was explained to the principal teacher with a request for suggestions.

Prior to the school board meeting, an informal meeting was held with the president of the village council. The president, who was also the former advisory school board chairman, expressed confidence in the new chairman

and offered to support the proposed community involvement in any way he could.

The first advisory school board meeting was held as is customary in the teacher's quarters with the teacher present. The facilitator requested to be absent for a period of time so that discussions and decisions could occur without the pressure of an outsider present. The request for a segregated caucus was denied. The board felt that there was no need for a segregated caucus and that a decision could be reached without being pressured by an outsider. The board accepted the proposal to begin examining and determining their own educational needs and to begin devising strategies to meet those needs.

In my opinion, the professional educator's commitment to formal learning experiences can limit his recognition of alternative types of experiences. The educator is accustomed to operating within his own culture-bound concepts of what is acceptable educational programming. Culture-boundness can act as a deterrent to the discovery of unique educational opportunities (Wolcott, 1967), which I firmly believe can best evolve from within the community itself.

In communicating and integrating locally acceptable educational change in cross-cultural situations, the objectivity of the facilitator is obviated by his traditional cultural background. The following excerpt from the report by the Governor's Commission on Cross-Cultural Education most succinctly illustrates the necessity for meaningful community involvement:

The Native community must have the opportunity to determine the type of education which their children are to receive. Decisions which will result in drastic upheavals in the lives of culturally diverse children should not be made solely by educators, psychologists, or anthropologists, regardless of their noble intentions and motives. Involvement by members of the Native community must not be at a superficial level nor serve as a device simply to better acquaint parents with the previously determined aims and objectives established by the schools. Rather, major educational directions must be determined by community members themselves—drawing, of course, upon the specialized knowledge of experts in relevant disciplines (Ray, 1969, p. 73).

It was an awareness of the above report that the community problem solving facilitator entered into Barren Bay.

Obviously, a community problem solving facilitator needs to know the community in which he will be working. This requires that he communicate with the residents. Communication is more than just verbalization. Communication is the sharing of experiences which develops shared frames of reference. The situation is much more difficult when working with clients whose culture is entirely different from that of the facilitator, as Goodenough points out (1967). Language and culture form barriers which the community facilitator needs to overcome if he's to increase his probability of successful focusing on the problem within the community.

I learned and used a few phrases in the local native dialect in my daily activities. Another factor which assisted me was the use of the village's English dialect. This speech form indicates to villagers that the outsider has shared certain village values. This speech form, as Schafer (1976) elaborates,

is recognizable throughout village Alaska. The form does not indicate residence in a particular village, but rather as having lived in villages for lengthy periods. The use of the dialect conveys a wide range of shared activities that would be denied outsiders. As Schafer observed, "the use of village dialect contains overt signals with attributes which allowed for interaction in value spheres that would otherwise have been denied" (Schafer, 1976, p. 11).

In the village of Barren Bay I became effective by becoming a vital part of the process of change and influencing the situation. My role became one of seeking a balance between my own initiative and that of the local participants. This balance would, as Biddle and Biddle (1965) indicate, allow for maximum encouragement of local initiative towards the attainment of identified goals.

In Barren Bay my community involvement evolved in numerous ways. These included attendance at church functions, birthday parties, innumerable teas and coffees, steam baths, movies, cesspool digging, supply unloading, rambling discussions on the beach, and village meetings. These contacts with community members provided an opportunity for warm and personal relationships to develop. Foster's observation in this regard is that "people, however well qualified technically, usually are much less successful in developmental work than are those who can establish friendships marked by mutual respect with the people who are receiving the aid" (Foster, 1969, p. 116).

I feel that a community problem solving facilitator can increase his affectiveness by attempting physically and emotionally to adapt to the village. Physical adaptation to a different culture is a relatively easy accomplishment. By living in similar housing and eating the same foods, the facilitator can physically adapt. He can hunt, travel, and build with his clients. These activities, although not part of the facilitator's normal cultural activities, can be learned. The learning and participation in these experiences involves the facilitator with the community and establishes some shared frames of reference with his clients.

Emotional adaptation requires extensive and lengthy involvement within the culture. Emotional adaptation leads to the ability to perceive events in the manner that they are perceived by the studied culture. Words and actions convey different meanings to those who share the emotional climate of the culture under study than those who do not.

For example, the Baffin Island Eskimo word "ionamat" is used frequently to convey any degree of physical or emotional pain. It is translated to roughly "it can't be helped" and is said when one accidentally cuts one's finger or on similar occasions. The expression is also used in referring to the death of a loved one. To the individual who is not emotionally adapted to the Baffin Island culture, it would seem inhuman to be so unfeeling and casual about a loved one's death; however, the word "ionamat" conveys deep meaning. The word reflects a philosophical state of mind based on the conditioning of the culture. This philosophical position may not be in keeping with the emotional framework on an outside facilitator and may lead to faulty conclusions on his interpretation.

Physical and emotional adaptation are essential ingredients when assisting groups that have an entirely different background from the community problem solving facilitator. Even when the language spoken is the

same, the meanings attached to various phrases and behavior are often different and incomprehensible to the outsider. Physical and emotional adaptation open the facilitator to communication techniques and meanings employed within the target group.

Physical and emotional adaptation lead to the development of mutual understandings. Without mutual understandings or shared frames of reference, the depth of insight established by the facilitator can only be minimal. Even when the community problem solving facilitator develops shared frames of reference, he is a vast distance from a true insider's view when he has not been raised among the people he is working with. The childhood games, the relationships with village adults and the "feel" of the environment are beyond reach, and the absence of an insider's view creates gaps of profound significance.

This whole question of communicating and integrating acceptable range becomes markedly different when the facilitator is a member of the target group. In these situations the approaches used by the indigenous facilitators often differ sharply from the approaches of the outside facilitators. Much can be learned in assisting the change process in native communities by observing how resident native community problem solving facilitators use informal information networks.

The following incident will illustrate some of the differences between approaches of facilitators who reside in a community and those who do not by looking at a group of eight university students participating in a village study program. Two of the eight students were native residents of the village. As the study progressed it became apparent that the community had a number of alternatives for their local schools. It was decided by the group to present these options to the community so that they could be fully aware of the range of alternatives. A chart illustrating various courses of action and implications of those actions was prepared for the community along with an outline. The two native residents in the study group had wholeheartedly participated in the collection and analysis of the various alternatives. However, there came an abrupt break which upset some of the non-native group members when the two native students decided that they would like to communicate the educational alternatives to the village and that they had no intention of using the prepared materials. Obviously the two native students were the most suited for the dissemination of the information in their community; however, the problem within the student group revolved around the rejection of the carefully prepared materials. The two students explained that although the outline and table depicting the alternatives were most beneficial for them in clarifying their own thoughts on the subject, the organization of the material and the chart itself were completely out of harmony with communication patterns within their village. It was explained that things are not elaborated upon with charts and outlines at village meetings. The two native students felt that the researched educational alternatives were important and should therefore be presented to the village. The two argued that the proposed method of presentation with prepared materials at a village council meeting would impede understanding of the alternatives and lessen the likelihood of subsequent action. The two native students suggested that they could more effectively disseminate the information through traditional informal information patterns.

The latter example indicates the vast cultural chasm in methodology

that lies between those concerned individuals from outside the community who wish to assist in the change process and those who are most affected by the change. Meaningful change doesn't occur easily from sources alien to a cultural system, with the notable and deplorable exception of armed intervention. Meaningful and durable change is that which evolves from within the cultural system itself.

Alaskan natives are rapidly assuming control over their educational systems. The communication and integration of this responsibility into the varied cultural systems that exist among the natives of Alaska is an awesome task. Those involved in the transference of this responsibility need to live in villages and in close association with community members. Community problem solving facilitators should be primarily responsible to the village. Because of cultural differences, indigenous community facilitators have a greater probability of success than do those less familiar with the life styles of villagers. Change, to be effective, must become an internalized conviction of the people involved. Through the internalizing of convictions, change and the longevity of subsequent programs can be sustained without the presence of external facilitators.

Locally acceptable change can occur only when it is time for it to occur and that season is best determined by the community itself. Programs to induce change may be forceably transplanted to communities by expert horticulturists; however, the climate of the greenhouse is often inappropriate for the field. Meaningful and durable change nurtures itself from the community's own perceptions of its needs. The communicating and integrating of these changes within a community can most readily arise when the community itself sees the need to cultivate.

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# ADMINISTRATIVE INFLUENCES IN ALASKAN NATIVE EDUCATION

by

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Formal education of the indigenous peoples of Alaska has been criticized, scrutinized, and analyzed continuously since schools first made their appearance on the Alaskan scene, but all this attention has had little cumulative effect on the way it has actually been operationalized. Despite numerous innovative attempts to localize the curriculum, modify teaching methods, and improve teacher selection and training techniques, schools in rural Alaska still remain largely alien and ineffectual institutions. While some of the special programs and approaches that have been developed and implemented over the years have made noticeable short-term differences, few can claim to have achieved a significant beneficial effect over an extended period of time. The generally acknowledged unacceptable achievement level of schooling in rural Alaska continues to be the subject of heated debate, massive funding, and intense activity, all of which continues to result in little substantive improvement. Why does so much presumably sincere effort produce so little desired change? The purpose of this paper is to examine the implications of that question based on the Alaskan experience, and to pursue some potential answers to it, with a particular emphasis on administrative implications.

The remarks presented here are an outgrowth of six years' observation of, and interaction with, schools throughout Alaska, as a University coordinator of a field-based program for the training of Native teachers. During that six-year period, I have seen numerous special programs come and go, some to be reborn, with little apparent recognition of past failures; I have seen schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the State-Operated School system and numerous local school districts, all coping with the same problems independent of one another, but with a similar lack of success; and I have seen school programs implemented by numerous administrators for widely diverse populations under highly varied conditions, with little noticeable difference in content, operational design, or effect. All of this has led me to examine the administrative styles and behavior of persons responsible for administering educational programs for people in rural Alaska, in an effort to determine the nature and extent of their influence on those programs. The impressions and analyses I present here are subjective and speculative, and thus require more systematic review before any serious attempt is made to implement alternative administrative approaches.

## The Traditional Administrative Role

The prevailing role of an educational administrator in rural Alaska has been developed and established through a long tradition of the delivery of educational services from an external benefactor to an indigenous, and presumed indigent, beneficiary, the Alaskan Native. An inherent characteristic of this traditional administrative approach is a highly centralized process for

definition and control of educational programs. Administrators are cast as authoritarian figures responsible for making decisions and seeing to it that subordinates follow through on the implementation of these decisions. The persons who hold these administrative positions are trained in traditional administrative practices which are an outgrowth of business and civil service concerns for uniformity and efficiency. The typical school administrator was described as follows, in a paper by Anthony Gregorc and Eileen Johnson, titled "Trespassing in the Holy Land: Relations Between Anthropologists and Administrators."

Most school administrators are managers of bureaucracies. Their advanced degree work at the master's and advanced certificate level is composed of courses which permit them to function well within their culturally-determined and reinforced roles. They therefore receive training in curriculum design, law, finance, personnel management, business procedures, and traditional leadership techniques. Rarely are options in the social sciences encouraged or sought. Social science data are not necessary when one focuses upon how people and strata are alike rather than how they are different. The nature of bureaucracies with respect to social arrangements encourages a likeness view by its concentration upon equal and fair treatment through rules; separation of people through specialization; and impersonalization through rank, stratified privileges, and seniority rights. Information about differences in people and pluralistic values is not needed nor appreciated when the administrator's orientation is toward likenesses.

A key function of the administrative role described here is that of reducing the variables with which the administrator must cope, so that the program operation is manageable. Thus, the administrator "encourages a likeness view" and either rejects as extraneous, or redefines in more manageable terms, those variables which interfere with or complicate established administrative procedures. This tendency on the part of administrators was also observed by Harry Wolcott, in a study in which he described the "variety-reducing" behavior of elementary school principals: "Their attention was directed at keeping things 'manageable' by drawing upon and reinforcing the existing system rather than by nurturing or even permitting the introduction of variation" (Wolcott, 1973). Such a "variable reducing" function is often-times necessary and is particularly adapted to operations where the end product is explicit and agreed upon, and the process for achieving the end product is understood and uniformly predictable. None of these conditions exist, however, in the field of public education in general, and efforts to achieve consensus on similar issues in the area of cross-cultural education have been especially difficult and frustrating. The effect of the traditional "variable-reducing" administrator on education in rural Alaska has been to discourage (and sometimes subvert) attempts to adapt educational programs to the needs of the local people. Program changes which have not significantly interfered with established administrative procedures or power alliances (such as a new reading program) usually have been readily accepted and offered as evidence of receptivity to change. But program changes which have introduced new complicating variables or have posed a threat to established

procedures and alliances (such as bilingual education, or the development of local school boards) have been, oftentimes, bitterly resisted without substantive counter-argument. The program changes related to curriculum, teaching methods, or teacher selection and training techniques, usually have been within-system changes and thus did not interfere with administrative relationships external to the system. But bilingual programs and school boards have introduced variables for which authority and expertise resides in the community, which implies a shift of power and control to a source external to the system.

For a person grounded in traditional administrative practices this can be a rather unnerving and threatening experience. The instinctive reaction is to seek ways to minimize the impact of the new variables. Only when he "sees the writing on the wall," will the variable-reducing type administrator adapt his position to accommodate the change, but then only to the extent that circumstances require him to do so. The community must, therefore, achieve a position of power and political influence to make its wishes felt, if it seeks changes which may affect the basic structure of the educational system, and there is no doubt that the Native people in Alaska are seeking such changes today.

#### The Problem

At issue then is whether or not an effort should be made to adapt the role of administrator to accommodate more directly to the educational needs of the people of rural Alaska; and if so, what kind of role should be developed? At first glance it would appear obvious that the administrative role should be adapted to meet the needs of the people, but needs are highly complex and constantly changing. If a new role is developed to address today's needs, will the same role be appropriate tomorrow? Might a prolonging of the traditional administrative role generate enough frustration amongst the people themselves to cause them to exercise control and establish their own administrative processes, thus achieving an often expressed but seldom addressed goal? Can the function of a school be adequately accomplished under any other than the traditional administrative approach? While these questions must be seriously considered, other more persuasive issues indicate that an alternative administrative approach is indeed needed in Alaska today.

The most encouraging sign on the horizon of Alaskan Native education is that the Native people are no longer content to be passive recipients of educational programs developed by benevolent educators apart from Native community involvement. The Native people are actively seeking a controlling interest in the traditional educational programs intended to serve their communities, and they are, at the same time, bolstering their interests by establishing innovative programs of their own which threaten to supplant the ineffective traditional programs. Much of the newly acquired political and economic influence of the Regional Corporations, established through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, has been directed to improving educational opportunities for the Native people. The variety of "bilingual-bicultural programs" that have sprung up around the state, and the several new institutions, such as the Tanana Chiefs Land Claims College, the Tanana Survival School, and the Inupiaq University of the Arctic are indicative of this growing trend. The Native sponsored programs have been developed outside the conventional channels and controls of the traditional educational

machinery, resulting in some innovative ideas with considerable potential for success. The initial response of the Native communities has been quite encouraging and supportive, but the traditional programs have been slow to respond.

These efforts however, are not always as threatening to existing programs and institutions as they first appear. The step from the conception of a new idea to its effective implementation is oftentimes a very frustrating and difficult one, in part because the persons technically qualified and available to accomplish the task, Native or non-Native, are themselves products of the traditional educational system. Consequently, the new programs often end up functioning in essentially the same manner and suffering the same inadequacies as the traditional programs. This problem is becoming particularly acute as the move to establish local control of the federally and state-operated schools in Alaska frees local or regional boards to develop educational programs uniquely suited to their needs, with little concern for externally imposed policies and administrative guidelines. Some of the new "Rural Education Attendance Areas" are finding their initial enthusiasm dampened because the operational versions of their attempts at new and innovative programs are often barely distinguishable from the programs they replaced. The new programs are handed over to an administrator who unintentionally subverts their unique qualities and purpose by translating them into a traditional administrative framework. Given the rapid development of new educational programs, many with only vague and ambiguous purposes and previously untried processes for achieving those purposes, it seems imperative that a new breed of educational administrator be fostered to assist these new programs through the trauma of their formative stages. How then might such an administrator define his role?

#### **An Alternative Administrative Role**

Fortunately, with the influx of numerous new educational programs in Alaska, school districts are experiencing a variety of alternative administrative approaches. As the number of unconventional educational administrators working in schools and Native organizations throughout the state increases, some common patterns and processes will emerge amongst the varied approaches, and these will gradually evolve into new administrative styles and practices. Through careful observation of these approaches we may be able to determine some of the characteristics that can be associated with a successful administrative style and prepare persons accordingly.

If the circumstances described above continue to evolve as indicated, the type of administrator needed to operate educational programs in rural Alaska in the future will probably be similar to that described by Gregorc and Johnson in the article cited earlier:

An emerging view of a new-breed administrator is becoming evident. He is seen as an implementer, facilitator, and evaluator of education programs. He is seen as a synergist, teacher of teachers, an organizational designer, a political statesman, and an accountability monitor. He must be aware of interpretations of Equal Opportunity, program design, trends in curricular and personnel administration, and of local community mores. In this view, the school administrator is less a bureaucrat and more of a leader and facilitator. He is expected

to understand individuals and groups and to utilize their individual talents rather than just manage an organization with fixed positions to be filled by replaceable, standardized parts. This type of administrator needs more than training in scheduling classes, disciplining students, increasing efficiency and managing an organization. He needs professional assistance in identifying and interpreting differences and likenesses among individuals and groups. Further, he needs guidance on how to organize collective efforts toward positive ends.

A key function of such an administrative role is to develop an administrative process that is capable of accommodating to the complex and dynamic quality of evolving educational programs. The administrative structure required for such programs must not only be able to support existing variables, but must be expansive enough to facilitate the development of new variables, allowing the programs to adapt to constantly changing circumstances. The new breed of administrator is, therefore, in a "variable-generating" role, and must possess the personal qualifications and expertise necessary to carry out such a role.

Since the variable-generating role implies an adaptive, innovative, flexible and loosely-structured administrative approach, a person in such a role must, above all, possess a high tolerance for ambiguity. The educational problems in rural Alaska are oftentimes only vaguely defined with numerous variables responding to erratic forces in a generally unpredictable manner. Solutions to these problems are, therefore, often elusive, and at best, tentative. The programs designed to address such problems must maintain an open-ended, evolutionary approach, constantly seeking and incorporating new solutions as the significant variables become more explicit and better understood. The administrators of these programs must avoid seeking closure on an issue before it is absolutely necessary, so as to encourage consideration of all possible variables related to the issue. They must, therefore, be capable of tolerating the high degree of ambiguity inherent in such an approach.

Another characteristic essential to a variable-generating role is that the administrator be people-oriented. He must be sensitive to human differences and be able to build upon those differences. He must foster informal, open relationships and delegate responsibility through a decentralized and horizontally oriented administrative structure. He must insure the free flow of communications in all directions, and he must himself be tuned in and sensitive to formal and informal communication channels. He must be able to organize people in such a way that their diverse interests and collective efforts fuse and move in a desired direction. Instead of focusing on specific content intended to achieve an explicit end product, the administrator must direct his attention to the processes that will carry things forth in an implicit direction. His emphasis must be on establishing decision-making and problem-solving processes in which participants can themselves engage, rather than attempting to make all decisions and solve all problems himself. He must, therefore, understand the relationship between individual behavior and the social organization within which it occurs, and he must understand the nature of change processes.

If the above characterization does, indeed, adequately represent an emerging alternative administrative role for rural Alaska, what should be done about it? A traditional administrator, steeped in a variable-reducing

approach, would find it extremely difficult, if not impossible to adapt to a variable-generating approach. Anyone who has worked under more than one administrator is aware of the integral relationship between personality type and administrative style. The personality of the administrator and his modus operandi are inseparable and, therefore, give rise to the need for careful selection processes to match the person to the job. The type of person required to fulfill a variable-reducing role probably would not be suited for a variable-generating role.

If we can assume, then, that different administrative roles require different administrative styles, and the need for a new role is emerging in rural Alaska, our first task is to make sure that administrators with appropriate styles are available to fill those roles. Local school boards should have a choice when they have the opportunity to select an administrator to implement their programs. Since existing certification requirements and administrator training programs are largely oriented to traditional administrative styles, little choice currently exists. More flexible requirements and alternative training programs should be developed to allow for the selection and preparation of a wide range of administrative types. Those boards and agencies responsible for selecting educational administrators should then be acquainted with the alternatives available, and allowed to proceed accordingly.

Although administrators are not the only ones responsible for the success or failure of educational programs in rural Alaska, they are the persons who most directly influence how the programs operate, and thus, determine their ultimate viability. While the above description of the administrative role is somewhat impressionistic and incomplete, I have attempted to shed some light on how alternative administrative styles can influence educational program development, with the hope that administrators will thus be able to more readily adapt their efforts to meet the needs of the people they serve. Maybe then we will begin to develop educational programs and practices that are flexible, sensitive, and adaptive enough to be truly applicable across cultures.

#### CONTRASTING ADMINISTRATIVE STYLES

Traditional	Alternative
Variable-reducing	Variable-generating
Centralized control	Decentralized control
Formal relationships	Informal relationships
Tight structure	Loose structure
Likeness-oriented	Difference-oriented
Vertical staff relations	Horizontal staff relations
Directive	Non-directive
Information flows out	Information flows in
Managing role	Facilitating role
Explicit rules	Implicit rules
Restrictive communications channels	Open communications channels
Content/product oriented	Process/direction-oriented
Converging focus	Diverging focus
Resistant to change	Receptive to change
Static structure and function	Evolutionary structure and function
Upward-responsive	Downward-responsive
Impersonal relationships	Personal relationship

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## PART III

# COMMUNITY/SCHOOL ISSUES

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*When the schools came  
village families were broken  
like stones under a great hammer.*

*The age-old pull of the seasons of fish and game  
still tugged at the chests of the men  
with the insistence of embeded fishhooks;  
and when the great caribou migration started,  
or apochrophal schools of salmon  
returned to Bristol Bay,  
when jagged leads began to appear  
like great seams in the Arctic ice pack,  
or the first dirty trails of springtime  
showed in the snow on the sides of mountains  
pinpointing bear dens . . .  
came the inevitable morning  
to Native families throughout the northland  
when there was something different in the houses:  
men rose up earlier than usual,  
and with great deliberateness  
pulled on their travelling clothes,  
drank coffee, talked very little,  
and went out on the trail of their fathers.*

*Women stood in the doorways, saying nothing,  
no longer able—as had always  
been their custom—to go along behind.*

*Little children ran after  
their daddies' disappearing boats—  
helpless to prevent the leaving,  
or the growing distance between them.*

*There were schools in the villages now,  
and the White Man's Law  
said Native children had to learn.  
Well, they would.*

—Bill Vaudrin

## TOWARD A SYNTHESIS OF CULTURAL TRANSMISSION PROCESSES

by

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Every cultural group has been faced with the problem of its own survival among diverse neighboring populations. Some process (either explicit or implicit) for transmitting cultural values and insuring the development of appropriate behavior in the society's children must be established. This process involves the transmission of the essential knowledge, skills, and techniques of the older generations to the younger ones. Such skills include those necessary for survival in the natural as well as in the socio-economic environment and their transmission can be further categorized in terms of informal and formal processes. The informal occur in an incidental way, often as immediate need arises, in a natural setting; the formal usually require the establishment of an institution of some sort which specializes in controlling such processes and which usually is separated in some sense from the general flow of social life. These processes of cultural transmission—socialization, or formal and informal education—exist to preserve the traditional cultural life of the society.

A specific cultural group's development of transmission processes depends upon two major interactive factors: the nature and needs of the child, and the goals of the society.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, each society is unique in the details of its socialization processes and there is great diversity around the world.<sup>2</sup> In Palau, an island in the Pacific, for example, children are taught in a painful manner that "people are not to be trusted,"<sup>3</sup> and this has definite repercussions in the economic, political, religious, et cetera, subsystems of the society. In contrast, the Ulithians, another Pacific Island group, are very "solicitous and supportive"<sup>4</sup> of their children, thus engendering trust and an atmosphere of relaxation. Although the basic physical needs of children in these two societies are likely the same, the groups' implied goals, based on their collective adaptations in their respective ecological systems, are different, and therefore demand the development of different emotional and intellectual attributes for the individual members of the culture.

Similarly, educational systems vary a great deal around the world especially with regard to their level of formality or informality. Chance<sup>5</sup> describes some aspects of the informal processes of education of the Inupiat Eskimo in northern Alaska as they were before contact with the Russians and Americans. Children learned the essentials of survival in Inupiat society and the natural setting by actually participating directly in the activities of the household. Boys accompanied their fathers on hunting trips while girls learned how to take care of the house. Religious and social lessons were learned through informal mechanisms like evening story-telling with elders or games and play with the peer group. There was no specific place or time that children learned important things; whenever there was a need or occasion for the transmission of traditional cultural skills or beliefs, such transmission occurred. This was an adaptive situation since, in a harsh environment like

northern Alaska, a group that depended on hunting and gathering its food could not spend a lot of time educating its young in a special place or at a special time or in a special way and obviously would not need to do so since most of the necessary things could be learned in other ways more closely connected to the daily lifestyle of the adults. They "did not have to worry about relating education to life because learning came naturally as a part of living."<sup>6</sup>

European and American societies have developed more diversified socio-economic systems with many more alternatives for an individual's survival in the environment and society. As a consequence, the school was developed as a formal institution designed to specialize in the transmission of certain aspects of the cultural heritage. Developed originally to teach children to read the Bible, the school slowly evolved to include many other areas, so that now it has taken on a larger share of the responsibility for transmitting a wide range of cultural values, attitudes, and knowledge to the young. It has also developed as a training ground for all sorts of vocations and careers and has begun to control, through educational sanctions, the gates to certain economic advantages. The school, of course, is a very formal mode of education; it "exists" only during certain times; five days a week, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for only 9 months each year; a professional elite has grown up to run it; special buildings have been built to house it; its activities are based on abstract systems which become increasingly complex as one progresses through the grades and increasingly separated from the ordinary daily life of the adult population. Although this American system of education has adapted somewhat to the highly complex needs of the society in which it developed, some critics would contend that it has become increasingly maladaptive, and that it does not really meet the needs of the young people anymore, nor does it transmit viable cultural beliefs and skills.

At any rate, it can be seen that both the indigenous Alaskan and the American culture groups developed their own distinctly unique cultural transmission processes according to their appropriateness for meeting the specific needs of the societies in which they arose. What happened when these different groups came into contact with each other in Alaska?

In a culture contact situation of this type, where one cultural group has a large population, great power, and great economic wealth, and where the other does not, usually the former becomes the dominant group. Its values, beliefs, and institutions take precedence over those of the smaller group, whose members begin to accommodate themselves to the larger group. This process is called acculturation. In Alaska, for several reasons, such a process has not been entirely completed; that is, although many Alaskan Natives have adapted some American technological and material elements as well as some social values and belief systems, they have not been completely acculturated. Many are still able to practice traditional subsistence lifestyles including hunting and gathering activities and their attendant social relationships. However, these are becoming more and more impossible to maintain with the influx of immigrants to Alaska and the development of mineral resources in the rural parts of the state.

This state of affairs, of course, has had and continues to have certain implications for the maintenance of continuity in the transmission of cultures in Alaska. With the introduction of schools to Alaskan Native villages there arose an obvious conflict between the American and indigenous peoples

goals and their respective processes of cultural transmission. An Alaskan Native child was suddenly subjected to at least two patterns of life, two value systems, two systems of belief—one in his home, the other in the school. Not only that—such a child was subjected to at least two types of transmission structures and methods—again one at home and the other at school. Such a segregated system of cultural transmission could only engender confusion, discontinuity, unrequited expectations, and insecurity.

Recent educational practitioners have attempted to overcome the dissimilarities of content between these disparate cultural transmission systems through such things as bilingual programs, culture heritage programs, Indian Education programs, et cetera. These all seem to be steps in the right direction because they attempt to reintegrate aspects of the two cultures. That is, they attempt to bring some of the more traditional aspects of Alaskan village life into the classroom; for example, they encourage the continued use of the Native language and furthermore, attempt to utilize it for teaching aspects of the dominant culture. Similarly, they encourage the continued engagement in traditional arts and crafts, survival skills, and technology not only for their own inherent value but to assist in the transmission of the indigenous culture. In this way, perhaps, the content of the cultures in contact are partially beginning to be meshed and melded into a new viable cultural alternative.

However, if the methods, the structure, the form of the transmission process remain strictly that of the dominant culture, such a meshing cannot be entirely successful. Cultural content which is inextricably bound to informal transmission techniques as in the indigenous Alaskan Native system cannot readily be transmitted within a formal framework like the school classroom without being significantly altered. Thus, if some sort of mutual acculturative process is desired and a new cultural framework more amenable to the needs of rural Alaskan residents is to be established, then some alteration of the processes of cultural transmission institutionalized in the school must take place. What is needed is a restructuring of such processes in a way which more closely reflects the Alaskan village lifeway. The specific attributes of such systems would vary with location. Certain culture-bound laws and regulations regarding education should be relaxed to allow for experimentation with alternative administrative and pedagogical structures. Education would not have to take place in one building, separate and different from all the others in the village, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, for an arbitrarily selected nine months of a year. It could be continuous, a part of the daily life of the village, and particularly of traditional roles, methods, and processes.

With the establishment of the Rural Education Attendance Areas, the people of rural Alaska have the opportunity to significantly alter the traditional American educational institutions in ways which will more appropriately meet their own needs. It is a difficult task and one which they will have to perform in their own way. It is up to the village people themselves to make decisions concerning the education of their youth. Only through their effort and commitment will it be possible to integrate different lifeways and cultural transmission processes by incorporating some of the traditional indigenous education modes into the formal educational process. Moreover, in view of the increasingly frequent complaints about the inflexible and adaptive nature of the traditional school systems in America, such experimentation with

alternative forms among Native Alaskans, may also greatly benefit others in the American society.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Watkins, Mark Hanna; pg. 427
2. Spindler in Beals; pg. 208
3. Ibid, pg. 210
4. Ibid, pg. 211
5. Chance, 1966
6. Yupiktak Bista, pg. 68

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## EDUCATION AND THE SUBSISTENCE WAY-OF-LIFE

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*Does One Way Of Life Have To Die So Another Can Live*

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Bethel

*The Yukon-Kuskokwim Region is considered the most 'backward' in Alaska and as such stands a chance of preserving its culture through the educational system. It is our intent that by incorporating the study and practice of our culture in our schools we can save this culture from which we come. It is our conviction that the Yupik way of life can be saved and only our young can save it.*

—Harold Napoleon, 1974

What kind of education will prepare our children for the uncertain future that lies ahead? How can education give them the options to strike their own balance in living on a combined subsistence and cash economy? How can we prepare our children to meet the unpredictable and difficult circumstances of the rapidly changing world?

We did not always have these problems of the meaning and purpose and approach to education. Before the erection of school houses and the introduction of professional teachers to whom Western civilization entrusts the minds of their children, education was growing up in a village. Education was done in the home with the father, mother, grandmother, grandfather, brother and sister, uncles, aunts, cousins, and friends. Education was also given by the weather, the sea, the fish, the animals and the land. Children at a very early age came to terms with the elements. We did not have to worry about relating education to life, because learning came naturally as a part of living. Education was the process of living: from the land, of subsisting, of surviving.

The coming of Western civilization broke this unity of education and living. Suddenly survival depended upon knowing a new language, new skills and new ways of relating to people and the world. Today we have entrusted the minds of our young to professional teachers who seemingly know all there is to know. They are teaching a child how to read, write, repair a car, weld two pipes together. But they are not teaching the child the most important thing. Who he is: an Eskimo or Indian with a history full of folklore, music, great men, medicine, a philosophy, complete with poets; in short, there was a civilization, a culture which survived the harshest of environments for thousands of years. Now this culture and the subsistence way of life are being swept away by books, patents, money and corporations.

It is not our intent to wage war on Western civilization. We merely want to come to terms with it—on our own grounds. We do not dislike Western civilization or White Man. We simply treasure our young and our culture. It is our belief that both can live together side by side, but not

necessarily eating out of the same bowl. We can share potlatches and Christmas together.

Most parents see school as a necessary and vital thing if their children are going to share and take part in the Western way of life. If we are to control our own lives and run our own affairs we must each know the ways of the dominant culture. And we must have well-educated leaders who can look after the interests of the Yupik people. But the shortcomings of the present educational system have to be recognized.

When formal education began in this region in 1886 with the first Moravian Mission, people began giving up some of the mobility of the subsistence pattern of living. In order to be near the school, they had to forego some traveling to hunting and fishing camps. But even though people have become well-settled in villages all of which have schools, the achievement rate for Native children has remained far below the national average. In 1960 the average educational achievement level in this region was only 2.6 years. By 1970, the average had risen to 4.6 years.

Underlying the high dropout rate and absenteeism among students is the fact that school is an alien atmosphere for the children. Well over 90 percent of the Native students in this region enter school speaking Yupik Eskimo which is spoken within the family as well as throughout the entire community life. Their lives become ordered by the ringing of bells and the calling of roll. They begin learning about buses, cows and chickens, Thanksgiving, baseball and spaceships; all of which may be interesting, but are nevertheless foreign to the village. Parents within this region have stated over and over again that acculturation and adjustment to Western society is not and cannot be a goal of education. However, a student's adjustment to the school environment demands acculturation which in turn represents a loss of traditional values and increased isolation from his own culture.

Look at the children at the age of five or six when they begin going to school to learn their ABC's from the adventures of Dick and Jane and their sense of history from the lives of George Washington, Franklin Roosevelt and Richard Nixon. The young children cannot identify with this way of living and these people. And so, as they are being prepared to go out into the world, they begin to lose a sense of their own identity, their own place and person.

This process of alienation continues and even accelerates when the children reach high school age. To attend high school they are usually away from their home most of the year. Their courses are designed to prepare them to go on to college and then on to various careers and professions. They are oriented toward finding the best paying jobs. Their lives become organized to the clock; the working day instead of the routines of living in a village.

Although the modern education system can give the children many skills that will be valuable, the process is usually very hard on them. During the time the children are away at school, learning more and more of the skills that it will take for them to live in the cities and become leaders in that world, they are learning less and less about their people and themselves. When they come back educated they are no longer the same children that we once saw leave for school. Some of them return home after so many years and are strangers to their own people. But much worse, they are stranger themselves.

It has always been difficult for parents to send their children from their

village to go to school. Their sadness has been balanced by the belief that this was necessary for their children's future, so they could make their way in a changing world. Now many of these parents are realizing that the education system has a great weakness that is leaving many children unprepared to live either in the village world or the outside world. It doesn't develop and strengthen a child's own image and confidence. His education doesn't help him know who he is or where he came from. His education leaves him stranded somewhere between the village way of life of his parents and the white way of life he has been taught in school. He is between two worlds, not really belonging to either.

#### Education and Survival

Our young people are often not prepared in practical ways to live in either world. Their high school programs supposedly lead to careers and professions, but all too often the young people can not find jobs. Employment in the region is scarce, with many skilled jobs going to white people who gained experience outside the region. Some young people migrate to the cities where there are more opportunities, only to find they are not prepared for the competition of the wage earning market place.

Likewise, the young people are often not prepared to live in the bush. During their student years they have not been learning all the skills necessary to subsist off the land. One result of their studies has been that many have not had the opportunities to learn how to hunt, fish, prepare food and make clothing. If subsistence skills are lost, there could be tragic consequences to the Yupik people who have by nature been self-sufficient. People have survived in this region only because they have known how to draw food, clothing and shelter from the land. In this time we are living now, people are tempted to depend upon money. If a person has one skill that can earn him money, he can go to the store and buy food, buy clothing, buy plywood and 2 x 4's to build a house. But there is great danger in this. Inflation is driving up the costs of everything so that one must work more for less. We have also seen that there are sometimes shortages of store-bought things. Sometimes one cannot find the food one needs at the store. Sometimes clothing, fuel, building materials and other things are not available. If a person knows only how to live from the store, he will be lost if one day the things in the store cost too much or are simply not available. But if the person also knows how to live from the land he will survive.

Until recently only a few radical economists and environmentalists dared suggest that there are limits to growth and wealth, that there could be a world economic crisis. But recently we have heard the President of the United States warn that a recession or depression might come. We hear world leaders warn that the world's economic system may collapse, that there may be widespread famine. But it is not hard to imagine our difficulties if such an economic disaster comes. If store bought supplies become scarce across the nation, our region will probably be one of the first places in which they disappear altogether. If there is nothing in the stores, money will be worthless.

And if money is worthless, the cash earning skills we have been taught will be worthless. The people who will survive will be the ones who have the skills to live from the land.

As a people and as individuals we must consider very carefully how our

education can make us dependent upon the Western economic system, the future of which, is unstable at best. If our children are educated just like other children in Anchorage, and Des Moines, Iowa they will grow to be just as dependent upon the Western economic system. Our children could come to be just as vulnerable as anyone to the fluctuations of the stock market and the whims of Arab oil dealers. But if the education our children receive helps them retain some of the subsistence skills and self-sufficiency of their ancestors, they will carry into the uncertain future tools which may make the difference between surviving and perishing in difficult times.

Subsisting and surviving require different skills in different places. The knowledge one needs to survive in Harlem is different than the knowledge one needs to survive in mid-Western farm country. Men living in the jungles of Brazil must know certain things to live in their environment; men living in the highlands of Nepal must know other things. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta is a very demanding environment which can seem hostile to those who do not know its ways, but which can provide life to those who know how to live with the land. Education of children in this region should equip them to live with the land.

Even if there is never an economic collapse, subsistence skills and knowledge of the land and waters will be invaluable. Such knowledge will permit Yupik people to live a fuller, richer life. And it will help them use, protect and manage subsistence resources in the context of the modern world. As long as subsistence resources continue to be the resource base of this region, knowing how to use them, and care for them will continue to be extremely important.

Just as important to the subsistence way of living as the skills of hunting and fishing, sewing and preserving foods are the ways of cooperating and working together. As elaborate as the modern classroom may be, it is still not equipped to really teach children the ways of sharing and helping others that has in the past been learned in the home and village. In fact, the competitive atmosphere of modern schools in many ways works at cross purposes to the cooperative atmosphere of traditional Eskimo education. This conflict is so fundamental that Pat Locke, a Sioux Indian wise in the ways of both Native and Western education, once said, "that all the differences between the two processes of education stem from the fact that the purpose of Western education is for the individual to find ways to excel and promote himself, his career, his life; whereas, the purpose of Native education has always been for the individual to find ways to serve his family, be a useful part of his community, to work for and with his people."

In our region, in our past, sharing and cooperation have not been just social niceties. They have been ways of survival. If everyone were just looking out for himself, the Yupik culture would have vanished long ago. It has been through sharing and helping each other that people have survived. Children learned these ways naturally as they grew up in the village. It is a great event when a boy gets his first seal, not just because he has proven himself a hunter but because he has something to share with others. His first seal is divided among people in the village, first to the older people who can no longer get seals themselves.

Frank Nokozak has related how he learned the ways of sharing and helping others: (John Paul Jones interpreting)

You know what the older people used to do for him? They

would share their things with the people who did not have them. He did this for the people who did not have . . . . When the people come to his place, he gives them food. People go to his home to ask for dried fish. He gives dry fish to those people because they need it. He said he wouldn't be like that if it wasn't for his dad, who used to tell him to always be kind and give to the people who do not have. His dad used to tell him to be that way because you only live once. The people are born in one time and die. He repeated that it was his dad that taught him always to be kind and share.<sup>1</sup>

The classrooms can neither teach the skills nor impart the values and character which link the children to the subsistence way of life of their culture.

#### **Building a New Way of Education**

The process of young people losing their identity and not being prepared to cope with life is costing us many young people each year. And each year our young people seem a little less self-sufficient, a little less able to live from the land. These problems have been growing since our first contact with whalers, traders and missionaries. How can they be dealt with? We do not have ready-made solutions. But we do have a starting point and a direction in which to head. To make education more meaningful for our children we must start with our people in the villages and proceed to develop an educational process that combines the learning of ABC's and algebra with our traditional values, skills, and ways of living and learning.

To begin developing this type of learning process, Yupiktak Bista started in the spring of 1974 a Cultural Heritage Program in which students<sup>2</sup> as the Bethel and St. Mary's High Schools returned to villages for two weeks. During this period, older people in the village taught the students their own history and traditional skills. A live-in learning experience was chosen over a "Native studies" course because such courses set students up as observers much the same way a birdwatcher studies a bird or an anthropologist studies a culture. If the student is just a watcher, he remains inactive when he should be an active participant and he can actually become further disassociated from himself and his culture. Only by "living" his own culture will a student come to appreciate, understand and be a part of it.

In describing the Cultural Heritage Program to some students, Peter Atchak, who helped get the program started once said:

When you get to a village the older people will tell you stories about how things were a long time ago. The women will teach the girls how to be women. And the men will teach the boys how to be men.

So it was that students went out to villages, often not their home villages, to live with foster parents who could teach them traditional ways. As the following comments by the students reveal, it was quite an experience for them. A boy who went to Hooper Bay said:

Activities I participated in were the Eskimo dance and telling stories to the old people (testing my skills, whether I knew or not the stories they told me; they let me do the talking the day after they talk.) What I made during the cultural heritage program was the spear, the spear handle, fish hook spear, fish hook spear handle, ivory

ring, a model seal out of soap stone, a parka, water boots out of seal skin, and information about how to make sleds, boats, and drawings of the old. The new skills I learned were to balance on top of the wavy sea in a kayak, and throw a spear without tipping over and a lot about hunting in the sea with just the kayak.

Man, it was all right! Because they were open to me as well as to my friends who went down to Hooper Bay. I would like to go back to a village where I stayed. And I was just getting dreaming with the old people. They brought me to their world. They let me feel I was old when I got out of their stories.<sup>2</sup>

Another boy summed up his experiences in Toksook Bay by saying:

All of these projects were of an advantage to me, cause I have never really gotten into Eskimo culture. Now I have a brief meaning of how survival takes place, what skills were needed to become a man, and how to make things to live out of.<sup>3</sup>

Staff of the Kuskokwim Health Corporation said:

... especially noteworthy to us has been the reaction of the students and dormitory parents to the First Cultural Heritage Program. "At a time when Bethel was experiencing some 'pre-breakup' behavior the high school students returned enthusiastic and in a positive frame of mind. Therefore, we would encourage the continuation of such a stimulating program with many desirable mental health consequences."<sup>4</sup>

The high school nurse was another person who noticed a change in attitude and outlook on life. Peggy McMahon said:

In working with the high school students as their nurse, I have been able to observe their behavior and attitudes throughout the school year. As always, the first semester of school started out with high enthusiasm in both teachers and students. However, there seemed to be a real let-down in spirit after the Christmas vacation. Class attendance seemed to drop and I found many more students in my clinic with vague physical complaints and emotional problems. It seemed that many students were using the excuse of going to the nurse's clinic, but just wanted to talk to someone about their restlessness with school and desire to go home. More than the usual number of students seemed to be 'down' during the months of January, February, and March. I think the introduction of the First Cultural Heritage Program at this time was valuable. It came at the end of the third quarter when spirits were especially low. I know that I was having difficulty dealing with the negative and demanding attitudes and behavior of many of the students during February and March. The Cultural Heritage Program seemed to give everyone a chance to learn different things and in a different setting than the school building. The first week after the Program I found that the students seemed happier, less demanding and better able to cope with some of their prob-

lems. than they were before the two week program.<sup>5</sup>  
Some of the strongest reactions to the Cultural Heritage Program came from the parents and old people who had worked with the students. Hilma Shavings from Mekoryuk said she felt this approach to education was:

... very important for our children, since a lot of our children are losing their own culture. I feel this program is a little bit of a beginning for our kids to see how their ancestors live to survive in this land that white man would call 'harsh country.' I feel this should be an ongoing program because even my own kids don't know how we have lived. They haven't seen the houses we used to live in. My own girl, that's going to Junior College, doesn't know how to sew how we do... I think this cultural heritage program will help the students. You never know what they might run into during their lifetime. At least, in case they run into some hardships they'll know how to make their own things. If it's a girl, make their own clothes and sewing and things like that. If it were a man, at least he will know how to survive if he was out on the tundra. You'll never know with all these traveling by snowmachines, airplanes, outboard motors, if you'll get to your destination. At least they should know how to survive without having to depend on these conveniences all the time.<sup>6</sup>

Also, emphasizing the importance of knowing traditional skills was Andrew Brown of Mt. Village:

This program was one of the best things that ever happened in this area. The things our forefathers used to do is to good of a thing to let it phase out. Who knows when the things the students learn might be the ones for survival in case of emergency or anything that will cut us off from the outside world. It could be for a short time or for a long period. Our land can still provide us clothing and food. Our young people should learn how to tackle with these things. Our culture is phasing out. Right now is the time to revive it back.<sup>7</sup>

In Chevak, David Friday said:

I've been home for a long time and I was home during the time the St. Mary's students and Bethel Regional High School students were at home and most of the people participated with the Cultural Heritage Program. Because of what's been happening some of these people haven't been doing these things. Then all of a sudden this Cultural Heritage Program came to the people. It made an impression on me that these people are learning that their culture is cool. I think this Cultural Heritage Program helped the people out in the villages too. Some of them dug up cultures from the past to teach these children. They are the type of people, I think, that are caught between two cultures. They don't know what to do or how to make a living because they are confused. I think with this program, it helped find themselves in a situation where some of these people weren't really too certain of who they really are, their real selves, where they'd be satisfied and happy about it... There were a comment

from an old man who said, 'I don't want to pass this life unless I pass my knowledge to another younger person.' I think this Cultural Heritage Program has opened that door to many of our people.<sup>8</sup>

The Cultural Heritage Program is not meant to turn back the clock, to prepare young people to live just as their ancestors did. Its purpose is to begin building a new educational process which will be based on our way of life. The value of passing on traditional ways is not because it is a way to turn from the present world, but because it simply offers young people the best hope of making their way into a troubled and uncertain future. Knowing the ways of their Yupik ancestors offers young people the invaluable qualities of self-confidence, self-reliance and the ability to live from the land should they choose to or should this become necessary for survival.

Modern education reflects the ways that Western civilization appears to have lost its way and no longer makes any sense. But we are now tied to this dominant culture. We must know its ways; we must have the necessary tools to cope with its problems and make use of its opportunities. So it is, that to find ourselves as individuals and as a people and make our way into the future, we will need the knowledge and ways of learning of our heritage and also the skills and knowledge of Western civilization.

How can a new process of education that draws from both cultures be created? What policy and institutional changes must be made? How will new curriculum, methods and teachers be introduced? These are not easily answered questions.

The difficulties of bringing about change in the entrenched educational system are many, but our experience with programs like the Cultural Heritage live-in has shown us that they are not impossible to overcome. And the basis for change toward an educational process combining two cultures must be an appreciation and acceptance of "multi-cultural equality." In education, multi-racial equality recognizes that Native students are still Native people. Many of them may prefer to speak the language of their people and to live in villages as hunters, fishermen, wives and mothers, rather than enter the competitive and materialistic life of the cities. Their education should prepare them for this way of life. It should not, as the present system does, cut off this option. And all of our children, even those who go on to college and professions beyond our region, need to know their roots in the subsistence way of life of the Delta in order to know themselves. So it is that the education of all our young people must include learning some of the old ways and learning how to subsist on the Delta today.

Multi-cultural equality implies that parents and grandparents should be involved in the educational process, as teachers, advisors, counselors, administrators, and school board members. A man or woman who has lived in a village all their life and perhaps has never gone to high school may nevertheless have more meaningful ideas about high school education on the Delta than a professor armed with degrees and years of experience.

The wisdom of our old people should be respected at least as much as the knowledge of the school teacher. Each finds within himself a balance between the elements of these two heritages and ways of life. Education should help keep options open for young people to live different kinds of life styles. The classrooms should not close the doors on the subsistence way of life that has been a good way of life for the Yupik people for thousands of years.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Testimony, D-2 Land Hearings, Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission, 1973.
2. Interview by Yupiktak Bista.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

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## THE SCHOOL CULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM: SOME QUESTIONS

by

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### Introduction

It is probably safe to say that most teachers and administrators in schools serving Alaskan Eskimos and Indians have at least entertained the idea of incorporating local history and cultural heritage into the school curriculum. The demand for minority rights nationally, the issues raised as a result of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the availability of federal grants for cultural heritage projects have inspired numerous attempts at teaching Native students about their own traditions. Unfortunately, many of these programs have been planned without adequate research, have had questionable results, and have not continued as a regular part of the curriculum upon the termination of the initial project.

Many advocates of cultural heritage programs do not seem to realize that a good program or project requires careful planning and thoughtful consideration of the issues involved. There are major questions which must be answered as part of the planning process. One of these questions is, "What is the local cultural heritage and how does one find out about it?" Most educators have no background in the subject and little in the way of the texts, audio-visual aids, and expertise which are available to them in curriculum areas such as math and reading. Although there are books which offer information about Alaskan Eskimos and Indians in general, there is often little written about the background of any one locality.

The purposes of any particular program should be given careful consideration. Enhancement of the student's identity as an Indian or an Eskimo is often given as the rationale for cultural heritage programs. Is it likely to be true that an Eskimo fifth grader will feel more confidently Eskimo if he learns how to carve an ivory seal? Or is it important that he learn how to make some of the traditional crafts so that he can sell them and supplement his income? There are other questions. What is the feeling within the community about cultural heritage studies? Do local people really want these things taught? If so, why? In what way do they value them? How can information about the students' historical past best be presented and who should do the teaching?

In an effort to deal with some of these questions as they apply to one Eskimo community, I took photographs and examples of traditional craft work to Nunivak Island in the summer of 1972 and conducted interviews with 62 Nunivakers between the ages of 6 and 72. The purpose of the study was to clarify the relationship of present day Nunivak Islanders to their art heritage and to make some recommendations for curriculum development. The interviews included questions about the traditional crafts of Nunivak Island and related stories, dances, and songs.

Due to the relative isolation of Nunivak Island, the traditional Nunivak way of life was not seriously threatened by outside influences until after 1940. As a result, there is more written information about Nunivak arts than

about most others in the Southwest Alaskan area. A review of the literature showed that this particular part of the world was a center for excellent ivory carving, wooden dish, utensil, and mask making in the nineteenth century and, to some extent, in the early years of this century. The women's crafts of basket making and skin sewing have persisted into the present. Little is known of prehistoric art in this region and there are no comprehensive studies of any craft of the area other than mask making. All of these crafts are represented in publications and in museums throughout the world.

### Results of the Interviews

The results of the interviews with Nunivakers can be summarized as follows:

1. The older the interviewee the more likely he was to recognize traditional art work and to understand its original purpose. The old people were the only acknowledged authorities in these matters. It was clear that traditional craft skills were not being passed on to the younger generations. Although most of the interviewees did some type of craft work, only the older ones were inclined toward the traditional crafts included in this study. More girls and women than boys and men did some type of craft work.

2. Masks which were close in appearance to recent Nunivak masks were recognized by more people than other styles, and, in fact, response to older area-wide styles was slight.

3. Masks were not in use in the village at the time of the study and had not been so for many years. Only the oldest interviewees had actually seen masks used in dances and ceremonies. Wooden dishes were apparently not in use at all at the time of the study and carved ivory objects were no longer produced primarily for local use. Grass baskets were still made partly for use and the other women's craft, skin sewing, was the most functional of all the traditional crafts at the time of the study.

4. When asked which crafts are most important today, members of each sex tended to emphasize the crafts made primarily by members of that sex. Over all, crafts were rated the most important to the least important as follows: mask making, skin sewing, grass work, ivory carving, and wooden dish and utensil making. The crafts made primarily by men, (masks, ivory, and wooden ware) were termed important mainly for their sale value whereas the crafts made by women, grass work and skin sewing, were made both for sale and for use. Nearly everyone interviewed wanted Nunivak children to learn about the crafts, stories, songs, and dances, which were discussed during the interviews. Interviewees indicated very little belief that the children would ever sell or use the craft items and placed more emphasis on group identity values.

5. Most people approved of the idea of sharing of Nunivak traditional arts and activities with other Eskimo villages, and, to a lesser extent, with White children. Nunivakers stated very strongly that they wanted Nunivak children to be taught about Nunivak things by Nunivak people.

### Discussion

Taken together, the interviews and the review of the literature indicated a pattern of changing values which have been associated with the crafts over the last one hundred years. In the nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, the crafts were made for use within Eskimo culture. They can be said to have had utilitarian value as opposed to sale/trade value.

When local materials, religion, and social practices were replaced with materials and ideas from the "outside," and Nunivakers became involved in the souvenir trade in this century, many crafts lost much of their utilitarian value. At the same time that manufactured items became available, a market for craft items opened and the crafts were then traded for goods or sold for money. At that time, probably beginning in the 1920's, the reasons for making many of the crafts objects became less for personal or family use than for sale or trade to outsiders. The crafts can be said to have gained an economic value which they did not have before.

Now, indications are that this value, too, may be disappearing as the older people who know how to produce these things pass from the scene and other ways to obtain cash become available. For example, most of the interviewees had no real expectations that the village children would ever make crafts either for their own use or for sale, and yet, they nearly all wanted the children to know about them. These things seemed to be gaining a new importance, not because they were to be used or sold, but solely because they were identified as Nunivak Eskimo things. The emerging value was cultural identity value. It cannot be said that this type of value was not previously attached to the crafts; that is, that they were not valued for their "Nunivakness," or their "Eskimeness," but in traditional times there was no pressure to make an issue of it. In precontact and early contact times, the local value system was not jeopardized by outside forces. The issue of ethnocultural "identity" had no meaning when nearly everyone, regardless of whether Mainlander or Islander, subscribed to essentially the same cultural patterns and system of values.

The reasons for the new valuing of Nunivak Eskimo things by Nunivak Eskimos may be speculated upon. Perhaps publicity concerning minority rights from the "outside" or the political climate involving the Native Land claims issues has affected local opinion. It may be that changed attitudes of some personnel in agencies and institutions toward Native cultural heritage and accompanying grants for studies and programs have had their influence. Or, perhaps increased sophistication on the part of residents in regard to the effects of "acculturation" on the local value system has occurred. Most likely, a combination of events and circumstances has stimulated thinking which has led to the new valuing of Nunivak arts.

Whatever the causes, certainly a question is raised in regard to the relationship of cultural heritage studies and the concept of identity. If an interviewee knew nothing about the crafts, if he had never used them, and therefore had no basis of association with his cultural group until the interviewer appeared on the scene, and told him that these were Nunivak or Eskimo things, how could these things be a part of his identity, a concept which Erik Erikson spoke of as being an "irreversible historical fact" (1968:11) or the basis of the feeling, "I am," or "I exist?" (Cohen and Brawer, 1972:10) The answer may be that if he had already established the category of "Eskimo things" or "Nunivak things" as valuable, and as a part of himself, then he needed only to learn that a piece of craft work belonged to the valued category in order to value and accept it. Certainly the older people, who had known these objects as parts of their lives, could be said to identify more closely and automatically with some of the arts

and crafts, but the desire of the younger people not to lose these things, even when it is obvious that the crafts mean little to them in terms of their practical, everyday lives, is not to be discounted.

Also, it would appear that an element of choice is possible in identification with a group of people or the things that one associates with that group. Erikson seemed to agree that the inclusion of things in one's identity or the things one identifies with can come from conscious choice although this will often be done in response to pressures that threaten one's basic value system (1964:93). Fitzgerald discussed a related phenomenon in his inquiry into the complexity of acculturation processes and the Maori of New Zealand. He implied that although one may never have experienced aspects of a given cultural heritage, he may make them a part of his ethnic identity, even to having the identity without the culture (1970:14). And, indeed, this would seem to be so. If, in the early thirties, as one Christian missionary claims, Nunivakers "threw their idols into the sea," (Almquist, 1962:52) and in 1972 they told me that they wanted their children to be taught about the traditional Nunivak things, then choice seems possible, however it might be influenced by historical pressure.

A critic of this change in viewpoint might point out that people clinging sentimentally to a way of life that is passing before they give it up is not good. Erikson might, judging from some of his comments on similar subjects, be inclined to say that the Nunivak people, threatened with the rush of acculturative influences now hope to bolster a tentative sense of centrality or ethno-cultural self with things that are no longer relevant to their everyday lives. He might even wonder whether they are attempting to maintain a "synthetic" identity. What seems important to this writer is that the individual accepts himself and his own background, ethno-cultural, or otherwise, and successfully integrates it into his personal whole. A sense of belonging to a shared past and a shared future with the group in which one associates himself would most likely facilitate this integration.

The problem is that Nunivakers have grown to adulthood in a culture which had traditionally passed on its values, history, and religion by means of observation and the oral tradition. With the observable traditional activities partially gone and the oral tradition interrupted by Western schooling, it is very difficult for Nunivak young people and children, under present circumstances to learn much about their own history which could be integrated into a personal whole. To complicate the situation, Nunivakers who complete eighth grade usually go on to a boarding school away from home for their high school years. In the case of the Nunivakers, the mechanism for transmitting the Eskimo past has been displaced by a mechanism which transmits other content. The content is the heritage and value system of their cultural "in-laws," the members of the dominant national culture.

However, as shown in the interview results, there now exists a conviction among the Nunivakers that there is an Eskimo cultural heritage, although what that heritage is does not seem to be entirely clear, either to many of the Nunivakers or to those who have written about them. Most interviewees felt that whatever it is is tied in some way to the old people in the village and embodied in their memories and skills. Along with this is a strong desire to have those things which are identified as being "Eskimo" valued and respected and taught to the younger Nunivakers, regardless of the antiquity or lack of it of the objects or traditions.

### Recommendations for School Programs

The strongest implication of this study is that the younger people should learn about traditional Nunivak arts. It is a temptation to recommend that the village school immediately begin to teach Eskimo history, arts, and crafts, and other aspects of Eskimo cultural heritage. However, it would be wise to think of what the interviewees said in response to the question, "Who do you think knows the most about these things?" The old people in the village were cited as the authorities and were the ones whom a substantial proportion of the interviewees wanted to teach the children. Because feelings about the Nunivak past appear to be tied closely to feelings about the oldest people in the village, the desire to have them act as teachers should be respected.

Also, while some teachers have read and studied Eskimo history, the teacher's access to knowledge of such matters is likely to be largely that which is available in the literature, and the available literature seems to be both limited in detail and written from the interested and often sympathetic, but nevertheless ethnocentric viewpoint of people who were not a part of the culture about which they are writing. Their records may be of value in explaining Nunivak arts to outsiders or in organizing materials, but should not be used as the sole source of information when knowledgeable older people who grew to adulthood within the traditional culture are available. An exception to that might be the presentation of such traditional arts as nineteenth century masks, which no longer exist in the village.

It is this writer's recommendation that the following guidelines be utilized for the teaching of Eskimo arts on Nunivak Island and other places in similar cultural circumstances.

1. In the formal school situation, Eskimo arts should be given their own place in the curriculum. A cultural heritage program need not be limited to the items discussed in the study. They were intended to be only representative of traditional arts. Nunivak Islanders and other Eskimo groups have produced a wide variety of items which were part of the material culture as well as stories, dances, games, and songs which were not specifically mentioned in the literature, but which are still known to at least some villagers.

2. The stance of the school system, the university, or any other agencies or organizations working in the area of cultural heritage should be facilitating rather than directive. Educational organizations should provide the mechanism whereby the most likely environment for the teaching of knowledge and appreciation of the traditional arts would be fostered, but the choice of whether or not to pursue this or that approach should be left up to the people in the village and the local school boards. Some things cannot be decided at all by outsiders. For example, one factor which complicates any scheme for teaching Eskimo arts is the matter of current religious beliefs and resulting attitudes toward the pre-Christian use of the masks. The masks and dances had a central role in traditional Eskimo religious ceremony. Any person who deals with cultural heritage studies must be careful to take into consideration local sensitivity to the traditional symbolism and function of masks and dances.

3. Whenever possible, older village people should be employed to teach younger people about these things. Responses to the interviews indicated that an initial effort on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to do just this thing was well received at Mekoryuk. Since there seems to be an existing

consensus as to which people in the village know the most about the various "old time things," it should not be difficult for an advisory school board to identify appropriate teachers.

School teacher aides and other regularly employed paraprofessionals could be responsible for part of the presentation and organizing of the local Eskimo arts program because they often give a continuity to the school program by their year to year presence and they should be closely attuned to community feelings.

4. Curriculum materials should be developed which will be supportive of the teaching of cultural heritage. The schools can present some things which have been collected by early explorers, missionaries, and anthropologists and are beyond the memory of the old people. A danger of distortion lies in the translation from the oral to the written tradition in stories and history, and from the three dimensional craft with a decorated surface to the photograph or drawing on the flat page and from the use of Yu'pik to English. However, within the present circumstances, this is partially unavoidable and it is mentioned as a caution against a callous wholesale presentation of stories and art work in printed form under the belief that this is totally capturing anyone's "cultural heritage." In general, materials should be presented as directly and as close to their original forms as possible.

5. The attitude of the school personnel should be neither condescending toward Eskimo arts nor should teachers insist that students do or study only Eskimo art. One of the most helpful functions of the school in this regard is that it can help show students the rightful and unique place which Eskimo arts hold in world art. Teachers should encourage an integrated viewpoint rather than suggest that there is an either-or choice to be made.

#### Further Study

1. Evaluation components should be written into cultural heritage projects. The focus should be on an enhanced sense of identity and would probably best be done by field methods which involve participant observation procedures. Local school personnel, including paraprofessionals, could employ these procedures in an informal manner or community members might want to be trained and utilized. It should be fairly easy, through the use of simple questions, to find out whether or not students know anything about it, whether it has any place in their own lives beyond school, and whether or not they think of it as related to their own cultural background.

2. There is still a need for further research for materials development and for scope and sequence in developing a cultural heritage curriculum. Very little has been written, for example, about the women's crafts of grass basketry and skin sewing. Also, further investigation might show that there is a culturally natural sequence for teaching craft skills so that certain kinds of things would be taught to some age groups and other kinds of things to other age groups.

3. Some comparative studies might be done concerning this particular group of Eskimo people and other groups whose traditional basis of identity has been threatened or obliterated. It may be that there are some unique things about the Alaskan situation including the rise of an interest in cultural heritage studies at a time when some of the traditional life style is still intact. Attitudes toward ethno-cultural identity in different groups might be compared. Another kind of comparison might also be made. If young Nuni-

vakers have no sense of a Nunivak past beyond their parents, whose own information may be limited, how are their attitudes toward themselves as members of a group different from young people who have had their racial and cultural histories taught to them and reinforced by the total environment of home, school, religious institution, and popular culture?

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## FIELD-BASED EDUCATION FOR ALASKAN NATIVE TEACHERS

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In the following paper I will attempt to reconstruct the conceptual and operational evolution of a program for the training of Alaskan native teachers. I will describe the first six years of the program's development, focusing on those aspects that reflect consideration of the unique cultural environment in which the program operates. I address these issues from the perspective of an academic coordinator for the program since its inception. My formal training is in anthropology and education. To the extent that a native point of view is expressed in this paper, it is a product of my interpretation of that view as a non-native, and should be judged accordingly.

### Background

The program, known originally as the Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps (or ARTTC), was established in 1970 as a four-year experimental program with the primary purpose of training native elementary school teachers. The original proposal specified that the training would be field-centered, and that it would meet the usual requirements for a Bachelor of Education degree and an elementary teaching certificate. Under a somewhat ambiguous administrative arrangement involving two universities and the State-operated school system, three staff persons (one representing each of the above) were hired and charged with implementing the program. Eleven training sites were established in rural native communities around the State, each with a team of four to eight undergraduate students (primarily native) and a full-time, certificated "team leader."

Under these conditions, we (the three program staff and eleven team leaders) set out to produce teachers. We began planning for a six week orientation program that was to prepare everyone for the years ahead. As we proceeded, however, we gradually realized that our task was not going to be simply a matter of applying the latest teacher training techniques to this particular group of students, thus producing a new and improved breed of teacher for rural Alaska. With this realization, we found it necessary to step back and ask ourselves a few basic questions:

1. Why train natives to be teachers?
2. What is a "native" teacher?
3. How do you train "native" teachers?

### Why Train Natives To Be Teachers?

Our initial response to the question, "Why train native teachers?" was to point out that nearly every recent study and report on native education in the country recommended such action. In addition, there was the political pressure from the natives themselves to become a part of the action. But that didn't answer the basic question, "Why?" It soon became obvious that we were moving into relatively uncharted territory and the only landmarks we could see were a few untested assumptions, such as:

1. A native teacher will be better able to assess and respond to the learning needs of a native child. This assumption presumes that similarities in cultural background between teacher and child will improve communication and thus foster greater mutual understanding and learning.
2. A native teacher will provide a model with which native students can identify, thus motivating them to achieve greater educational success. This assumption presumes that a native teacher will acquire status in the eyes of the native community.
3. A native teacher will remain within the State and acquire greater cumulative teaching experience which will result in a broader and deeper understanding of local educational processes. This assumption is sometimes viewed as "parochialism," but it addresses the very real problem of transiency.

We proceeded with these as untested assumptions, because the State had too few practicing native teachers to provide any basis for determining otherwise. We, then, had to explore another question, "Why have so few natives become teachers in the past?" On the basis of our own training and experience, we were confident that the native students possessed the necessary capabilities to become teachers, so the easiest response to the question was to blame "the system." Only a few Native students were coming to the universities for an education, fewer were enrolling in teacher training, fewer yet were completing a four-year degree program, and of those who did complete a teacher training program, only a small number returned to a native community to teach. But blaming the system did not satisfactorily resolve the question either. So again, we had to postulate some ideas through which we could determine how best to proceed with a program that was supposed to address this particular problem. Our assumptions were:

1. The university campus, as a detached and somewhat impersonal learning environment, contributed to the low academic achievement rate of native students. Coming to the university was a one-way street for many native students. A successful campus experience required familiarity with and adherence to a wide range of socio-cultural patterns, many of which were not compatible with the attitudinal and behavioral skills required for survival in the village. Thus, a native person who learned to survive on campus often was no longer satisfied with, or acceptable to, his home community.
2. The teacher training curriculum did not address the needs of students desiring to teach in a physical and cultural environment different from the unidimensional, ethnocentric model around which most teacher training programs were designed. Contemporary teacher training curricula placed a great deal of emphasis on preparing the teacher to assess and provide for "individual differences." Students were saturated with a psychological perspective of learning and teaching, derived largely from the study of individuals and small groups within Western society. While such train-

ing may have been useful, and even necessary, it did not provide an adequate perspective for assessing and responding to the needs of children in rural native communities. Their individual needs had to be assessed within the context of the broader social and cultural environment within which they existed.

Assuming then, that native teachers would provide a unique and desirable service to rural native communities, and that the detachment of the campus experience and the inadequacy of the teacher training curriculum were partially responsible for the limited number of such persons, we now had a rationale and some points of departure from which to proceed on our evolutionary journey.

#### What Is A "Native" Teacher?

We did not proceed far, however, before we realized that in order to develop and operate a teacher training program we had to have some idea of what we were trying to produce, or at least a direction in which to move. We had an alternative to the campus setting, in that the program would be largely field-centered, but we could not develop an alternative curriculum until we had some idea of the kind of teacher we wanted. We could have taken the traditional teacher training curriculum and delivered it to the students in the field, on the assumption that such an approach would at least succeed in placing some natives in the teaching profession. But this approach would not capitalize on the unique strengths the students might possess as natives. Worse yet, it might even destroy some of those strengths.

On the other hand, we could deviate from the traditional curriculum by defining the teachers' role in the form of "competencies" and judge the students' teaching ability on the basis of "performance criteria" assessed in terms of "measurable behavior." In this way we would at least have some flexibility in developing the program. But defining the competencies required for a "native" teacher, proved to be an elusive endeavor for no prototype existed. The handful of teachers of native descent in the state had all gone through a traditional teacher training program and were barely distinguishable from other teachers. In addition, no one prototype of a teacher, native or otherwise, could possibly satisfy the diverse cultural and educational needs of the rural native communities. We were also concerned about becoming too bound up in the mechanics of a strict "competency-based" approach and losing sight of the original purpose of the program. The competency approach, therefore, seemed more inhibiting than helpful for our purposes.

We knew, from the limited literature on the subject at the time (primarily Collier), that subtle differences between native and non-native "teachers" in their relationships with native children appeared to have a significant impact on the response of those children to formal learning, even though the materials presented and the learning environments were otherwise similar. The differences seemed to be related, in part, to more compatible communication and interaction styles between native teachers and students, derived from prior associations and common cultural experiences. One of our major concerns then, was to avoid destroying those characteristics inherent in the native person's attitude and behavior that might allow them to relate more effectively to native children. Although we still could not define the ultimate end product, we could at least now state that the program would

attempt to protect and nurture the intrinsic qualities that the students brought with them. But we were no further along in explicating those qualities.

We were also aware that the institution of "schooling" and thus the role of "teacher" as we know it today, were once alien notions in the rural native communities, introduced to the native people within this century by well-intentioned outsiders who only vaguely understood or anticipated the consequences of their action. While "education" was viewed primarily as an informal and life-long process prior to the arrival of schools in rural Alaska, it had since become synonymous with those activities that occurred within the large, luminated building on the hill, and had been further confined to six hours a day, five days a week, 180 days a year. Consequently, the parents and children in the remotest community in Alaska had developed expectations regarding the role of "teacher" similar to those held in any other community where a school, a classroom full of children, and a teacher existed.

Any effort to define the native teacher's role in the context of a specific cultural background was further constrained by the desire on the part of the students themselves to be prepared to teach not only in a rural Alaskan native community, but in any school in the country where an Alaskan teaching certificate could be parlayed as an acceptable license to teach. They did not want a second rate education. We resolved, therefore, that the best judges of what constitutes a native teacher would be the students we were about to train, so the most logical course of action was to obtain their assistance in the development of the program. In that way, we could help the students define their role as we went along. Maybe in the end then we would have some basis for determining whether a native could be a native and a teacher too. Consequently, what follows is as much the product of student thought and effort as it is that of the program staff.

#### How Do You Train "Native" Teachers?

With a few assumptions in hand to serve as guidelines, a limited conceptual framework within which to work, a vague direction in which to move, and a group of enthusiastic students to lead us, we ventured forth on our journey. Following a brief getting-acquainted and settling-in period in the field sites, all the students and staff came together for an intensive six-week orientation and work session. It was during this session that the essence of the program evolved.

The individuals from each field site, including the team leader, began to work together, gradually forming a closely knit working team in which the whole became more than the sum of its parts. Team members assisted each other in their work and openly exchanged ideas and opinions to their mutual benefit. Native and non-native students viewed each other as equals and began to explore their similarities and differences. Natives from different ethnic backgrounds within the State discovered they could learn much from each other. They learned how to communicate and understand each other's view through direct experience. Once established, this interaction process carried over on their return to the field sites. The native students learned how to cope with "the system" from the non-native students, who in turn learned how to cope with village life from the native students.

Following the return of the students to the field, we discovered that one of our earlier assumptions needed a broader interpretation: The native

community, as a remote but intensely personalized learning environment, was contributing to the low academic achievement rate of non-native students. The non-native students, who comprised one-fourth of the student population, were responsible for nearly one-half of the drop-outs during the first year. They were experiencing the same problems of adjustment to the native community that native students experienced coming on campus. But while this approach created some adjustment problems for the non-native students, it provided numerous advantages for the native students, and for the program as a whole. The delivery of the training to the rural native communities permitted the native students to control the effect of the learning experience by allowing them to encounter it on their own ground and on their own terms. With the help of fellow team members, including the team leader, the students approached their coursework as a cooperative enterprise. When a student had difficulties with a particular assignment, someone was close at hand to help him out. Also, the students did not feel threatened by the instructors (who were sometimes 1500 miles away) or a large classroom environment, so they did not hesitate to provide feedback to the instructors regarding the courses they were receiving. Instructors working with the program frequently commented on the high quality of work and degree of interest shown by the students in the coursework.

The most significant consequence of the field-centered approach was that it permitted the native students to maintain contact with their own community. Their relationships in the community were often strengthened and several students moved into leadership positions as they developed their abilities to understand and deal with community and school problems. Although the native students were developing many skills and ideas of non-native origin, they were learning and changing within the context of the community, so that no major discontinuity was experienced. Changes within the students and within the communities were continually blended through cohabitation, thus allowing for compatibility of interests and roles as the new life styles evolved.

The same process applied to the native students' experiences in the schools. They gradually worked their way into the classrooms and assumed a variety of roles, sometimes adapting to the situation, other times adapting the situation to themselves. In this way, each student was able to define and carve out his own role as a native teacher in the school and community.

### Curriculum

So far I have focused my discussion on two particular structural elements of the training program, namely the team concept and the field-centered approach. What about the "curriculum?" What were the students doing, and what were they supposed to be learning during their stay in the program? In the development of the training design for the program, our concern was focused on the totality of the students' experience—not just the particular courses they would take. Thus, curriculum was viewed in its broadest sense, as encompassing context, process and content. In that sense, the team concept and field-centered approach were integral parts of the curriculum.

The context was the community, within which the school was viewed as one element in the total educational experience of each child. The students spent nearly all of the first year living, working and studying out in the community. The training program attempted to capitalize on the resources avail-

able to the students through activities that brought the students in direct contact with the realities they would face as teachers.

Within this context, the students learned through an experiential process—that is, they came to understand the world around them and their role in it through direct experience. They learned how a community operates by living in and studying their own community. They learned how a child grows by interacting with and observing real children. They learned how to teach by teaching. They learned how to learn from each other as a team. Most importantly though, through this "confrontation with reality" process, they learned about themselves and how their lives are affected by and affect those around them, which sometimes necessitated a considerable reconstruction of the individual's view of "reality" and his role in it.

On top of all this, we had the curriculum content. This could be partially summarized by running down the course list on a student's transcript. But the course titles cannot adequately portray the learning experiences associated with each course, particularly those offered in the field. The field courses were drawn primarily from the social sciences, the humanities, and education, since these could be most easily adapted to, and capitalize on the field setting. So a course that appeared on the transcript as "Anthropological Field Methods" included, inherent within the course activities, a variety of concomitant learning experiences not necessarily represented in the course outline. For example:

1. The students prepared a detailed map and household directory showing all the buildings in their respective communities and listing the residents by age and level of schooling. This brought them in contact with everyone in the community through a purposeful activity, and resulted in a document that was useful to many people in the school and community, not to mention the specific field method skills the students acquired in the process. This activity placed emphasis on the participant-observer's role, with the native and non-native students sharing their observations from an "insider" and "outsider" perspective. Each activity was preceded by background reading and discussion, and followed by analysis and write-up.
2. The students prepared and conducted open-ended and structured interviews, focusing the questions on an education-related issue that was of immediate concern to themselves or to some element of the school or community. In this way they provided a useful service while gaining experience in interviewing techniques.
3. The students constructed and administered a questionnaire to a sampling of students, teachers, and parents, obtaining information regarding their attitudes on certain school-related issues. They compiled and analyzed the data, and made comparisons to determine the similarities and differences in the three sets of responses. In addition to learning about sampling, and the strengths and weaknesses of questionnaires as a data-gathering technique, they stimulated a lot of discussion in the community regarding the issues and were able to better understand some

of the problems they would face as teachers.

4. Each student selected an informant from the community and prepared a "life history," focusing attention on the educational development of the individual. This activity stimulated dialogue between the students and other members of the community, and gave the students some perspective on the processes of cultural transmission, culture change, and acculturation, all of which are highly significant processes for teachers to understand in contemporary Alaska.
5. The students at each site were provided with film, cameras, and a complete set of darkroom equipment, and trained in the use of photography as a research technique. Each team prepared a photo essay of their community, including a photographic overview, incidents of social interaction, a survey of the technology evident in the community, and a pictorial summary of their own activities as a team. These albums were then brought to the campus during the summer and shared with their fellow students from other teams. This enlarged their perspective on the diversity of cultures and environments existent within their own State.
6. Finally, all of the above information, along with a variety of additional data, was compiled and reported in the form of a community study. The information contained in these reports was of subsequent use to the students, and in several cases, accomplished useful purposes for others. For example, the household directory compiled by the students in one community was instrumental in convincing the U.S. Census Bureau that they had made a 40% error in the official 1970 census conducted the same year. In a community of 500 actual population, an error of this magnitude can result in a drastic misappropriation of critical funds and services that are allocated on a per capita basis. Such results can stimulate a great deal of motivation and interest on the part of the community as well as the students.

I do not wish to imply that all courses were as able to capitalize on the resources of the field setting as the one I have described. Indeed, many courses were simply re-runs of the same courses as taught on campus. To the extent, however, that the instructors were familiar with the field setting and able to adapt their course to that setting, they usually did so.

The conceptual and methodological framework embodied in the curriculum and program design drew heavily on the social sciences, in particular, anthropology. While this may be in part a reflection of the educational background of those of us responsible for the academic component of the program, it did not occur without purpose or reasoning. If the students were to eventually overcome the ethnocentric confines of the existing educational system, and see beyond the usual narrow definition of concepts such as "schooling" and "teaching," they would have to develop a perspective that transcends cultural boundaries and provides a holistic and adaptive frame-

work for assessing needs and resolving problems. For that perspective we looked to the content and methods of the social sciences. We employed the concept of culture in its many and varied manifestations, as a means to help the students better understand and assess the needs of the children they were preparing to teach. We used the methods of anthropology to guide us in the development and implementation of the program design. As the program evolved, we gradually developed a separate undergraduate curriculum with an interdisciplinary focus on cross-cultural education, which has since been incorporated into the university's degree offerings.

#### **What Have We Learned?**

Since the program was intended to be experimental in nature, we have taken advantage of the rare opportunity to do a lot of experimenting. The whole program has, in effect, been an experiment in the techniques of survival in a bureaucratic society. We have experimented with alternative models in teacher education. We have experimented with different approaches to the delivery of academic coursework. We have experimented with a variety of conceptual frameworks for viewing the process of education. And we have experimented with people's lives, to the extent that we have ventured forth with them into the unknown.

By 1974 we had completed a four-year cycle of the program and forty-two of the original sixty students had graduated, so we took stock of our experience and revised the program to expand on its strengths and reduce its weaknesses. We changed the team leader role from a certificated teacher to that of a university faculty member who remained in the field, but whose responsibilities were expanded to encompass a region rather than a single community. In this way the instructors could become more familiar with student needs, and more students could have access to the program.

We also expanded the curriculum beyond the elementary teaching emphasis to include the preparation of bilingual teachers and teachers for small rural high schools, and the development of a non-teaching degree emphasis in "human resource development" to prepare persons for the educational development roles in the new regional and village corporations (see Gaffney, this publication). Since the program's efforts were expanded beyond the preservice training of teachers, the program name was changed from ARTTC to the Cross Cultural Education Development Program (or X-CED), reflecting the broader application and focus of concern. In addition, a Masters program in cross-cultural education has been developed and is now available through the same field delivery system established for the undergraduate program.

So what have we learned from it all? In effect, we have learned most of what I have presented above. Although we had some vague notions about what we wanted to do in the beginning, we had no detailed, premeditated plan or preconceived model from which to work. Since we were unable to obtain an acceptable training model elsewhere, and we did not want to force the students into a potentially inappropriate model of our own making, we decided to use a process approach and let the program evolve. What I have described above as the program is what we have learned and accomplished through a process of evolution.

We also have learned that the single most important characteristic that program personnel must possess, if such an approach is to succeed, is

a high tolerance for ambiguity. Many persons find it difficult to cope with uncertainty and to proceed with little more than intuition and instinct as guides. They seek structure or closure on a matter prematurely, thus reducing the opportunity for flexibility and adaptability. Under contemporary pressures for accountability and related demands for the delineation of specific objectives and the development of flow charts in pursuit of explicit end products, it is indeed difficult to survive on a creed that declares, "We will know where we are going when we get there." So far, we have learned enough about what we are doing and where we are going to be able to satisfy our own needs for direction and to meet the challenges of each step along the way. If we had tried to anticipate in the beginning all that we know now, we would have been overwhelmed and given up long ago.

We have learned many other things since we started our journey that have implications for what we are trying to do. Since some of these are still vague and undocumented notions, and others are fundamental questions that may not be resolvable, I will present a few of them in brief, summary form here, as points of departure for future discussion.

We have learned that it is difficult to be a native and a teacher too. Many aspects of the two positions are incompatible and the demands of the role are enormous. On the one hand, as a native, the native teacher is expected to represent the community's interest in the school. On the other hand, as a teacher, he is expected to represent the school's interest in the community. Until the function and format of the school is compatible with the needs and cultural milieu of the community, however, compromise is inevitable for the native teacher. In addition, the adaptation is usually in the direction of the school, for it is difficult to significantly change the role of the teacher in the context of a conventional school environment. So the native teacher faces a Catch 22—the more effective he is as a teacher, the less effective he may become as a native, and vice versa. Our concern then, is that placing native teachers in the schools may not significantly improve the education of native children, if the design of the institution itself does not change. But who is to change it, and in what direction? (See Barnhardt, in publication.)

We have learned that our program may not really be training "teachers" after all. Six months into their first year of teaching, we brought the first group of graduates back together at a meeting to find out how they were doing in their hard-won profession. They related a variety of concerns, particularly in reference to the day-to-day routine of teaching. They did not feel satisfied with such everyday teaching responsibilities as lesson planning and classroom management. The consensus of the group was that they were frustrated as teachers in the schools; because they had been prepared as "educators." They felt more like general practitioners than specialists. Consequently, many of them left the schools and took up practice in other types of educational programs. Our tendency, at this point, is to view this outcome more as a success than as a failure.

We have learned that the literature in education, as well as anthropology, is often of limited use in our program. Almost all of the literature normally used to help prepare teachers for work with cultural minorities assumes that the teacher will be from outside the culture. From the native students' point of view, the literature is "culturally deprived." While such issues as "familiarity with the cultural background of the children," or